



Dunmow St Mary's Primary School

Policy for English Writing

July 2017

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Writing Policy

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Dunmow St Mary's Primary School

ENGLISH POLICY

Writing

Introduction

Children write best when they write about something they know about or are interested in. Offer them a subject that immediately engages their imagination, and they will think about it, talk about it and finally, write about it.

We know that there needs to be that initial moment of inspiration – an event, observation, or experience – that acts as a catalyst. After that, the writer's craft hones and shapes the story, allowing the characters, setting and plot to speak to the reader.

The first challenge with getting children to write is offering them that initial, creative experience that fires their imaginations and makes them want to write. After that, you need to focus on the 'how'.

Pie Corbett

Ethos

We aim to provide a stimulating and challenging learning environment, which gives every individual an opportunity to fulfil his or her potential to the highest possible standard.

We expect that children will leave the school with confidence in their own ability, with the skills to extend and apply their knowledge, and the belief that learning is enjoyable and rewarding.

We can best provide a supportive and stimulating environment for learning by working as a team and by providing every opportunity for all staff to be involved in planning and policy making. An interesting and well-planned curriculum is essential for effective learning, as is a caring and well-ordered environment.

In the interests of every child we endeavour to:

- Match work to individual needs
- Concentrate on educational processes as well as outcomes
- Share responsibility for learning, planning and reviewing with the children
- Encourage confidence and co-operative learning
- Emphasise first hand experience
- Teach certain basic skills in a consistent way
- Emphasise the development of cross-curricular skills
- Teach respect for the abilities and views of others
- Provide opportunities for success over a wide range of activities
- Celebrate all kinds of achievement
- Have high expectations of every child
- Provide opportunities for exploration in depth as part of the curriculum

Aims for writing

The National Curriculum document states:

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their

love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences

The ability to write is an essential skill, which must be developed and extended during a child's primary school years. We aim to teach children to write in a range of styles for different purposes and audiences, by providing a wide variety of experiences and opportunities. We aim to make the learning of English more relevant to all children by linking the writing activity to the topic work. The emphasis is on making the writing meaningful and relevant to the topic.

Writing and its place in the whole curriculum

There are many opportunities for writing across the whole range of the school curriculum, especially in the diverse and stimulating atmosphere created by the topics studied from Year R to Year 6. It is important that whenever children are asked to write, the context of their writing – the purpose and audience – is clear to the teacher, and is made clear to the children.

Writing will be effectively taught if;

- Teachers have planned the activity to develop aspects of writing particular to the needs of the children and their developmental age, and have planned specific teaching points to be shared with the children.
- Children are aware of what they have to do in their writing to make it most effective to the audience, in whatever context they are writing.

Writing experiences should take account of the opportunities provided by other subjects to support work in English; the teaching of writing **cannot** be limited to English lessons, e.g.

Maths - Instructions for a board game based on counting in tens, a report on an investigation into the relationship between area and perimeter

Science - a report of an investigation into the colour of flowers preferred by bees, notes taken during an observation of a candle burning

Technology - a comparison between two products - one ready-made, the other designed by a group of children

Geography - A geographical report on the destruction of Dunwich cliffs in Norfolk written in the form of a newspaper article, a numbered report on the stages in the water cycle, descriptive writing based on the eruption of a volcano, a postcard from a European country, describing a holiday in one of the main cities

History - a dialogue between fictional historical characters about a national event such as the "Fire of London" written as a play script, a letter from a Roman soldier describing his first impressions of Britannia

Music - an imaginative response to Vivaldi's "Winter" from the "Four Seasons" in the form of a poem

Art - an exhibition catalogue, describing individual pieces in a collection of ceramics made by the children

RE - the story of the "Good Samaritan", told in a cartoon strip, a poem describing friendship

How writing develops key skills of learning

The National Curriculum states that at all key stages pupils “should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas”. This key skill of communication must include effective writing. During the teaching of writing we emphasise the audience being targeted. We often use the opportunity to target the writing for different ages, and share the writing with another year group. The ability to write fluently for a range of purposes and audiences is crucial, and this aspect of the teaching is considered very carefully during planning. Even at its very earliest stage, in Reception, the children are given opportunities for writing in the role play areas, for example, where they might write messages to others about the things they have done there.

Skills taught also include the ability to make critical and informed judgements about when and how to use computers for maximum benefit in writing. Children are asked to think especially of layout and targeted audience, for example, the Year 1 children make labels for their work using word or 2Paint. Persuasive writing, such as producing a leaflet, lends itself to using a computer and the children are asked to modify and evaluate their work, thinking particularly how the tools available can enhance presentation. (See Part 4: Using computers to support the teaching of writing.)

If a piece of writing is to be meaningful then it must be shared with others. Our planning includes providing opportunities for sharing the writing in class. This may be within the class itself, such as performing a play script, or by writing for another year group. Writing provides many opportunities to cooperate and work effectively with others in both formal and informal settings. Children evaluate each other’s writing and are regularly asked to suggest in a positive manner ways in which each other’s work can be improved.

Improving own learning and performance involves pupils reflecting on and critically evaluating their own work and what they have learnt. We involve the children in setting their own goals for writing. We also make explicit to the children the progress they are making and they are asked to discuss the next step in their progress. Each lesson should include success criteria, often linked to specific writing targets, and each child can judge their own performance based on these.

All subjects provide pupils with opportunities to respond to the challenge of problems. In our teaching of writing children are encouraged to respond to real life problems and to plan an appropriate form of writing, which will achieve a particular outcome. For example children in year four might be asked to write about the problem of the rainforest destruction and reception children explain how they made their ‘troll trap’ for the Billy Goats Gruff.

By using thinking skills children can focus on knowing *how* as well as knowing *what*. The following thinking skills complement the key skills and are particularly relevant to the teaching of writing at our school.

Information-processing skills: These enable pupils to locate and collect relevant information, to sort, classify, sequence, compare and contrast. Children should be able to write in a specific style, which is relevant to the task; they should be able to present information in a way that is easy to follow and in the correct format.

Reasoning skills: These enable children to give reasons for opinions and actions, to use precise language to explain what they think. In appropriate writing activities children are asked to use evidence to back up their ideas and opinions. They need to be able to identify the key areas and make notes about their ideas.

Enquiry skills: These enable children to ask relevant questions, to pose and define problems. Children need to be able to plan what to do and to predict outcomes. In writing, this will include developing ideas from a plan, drama or from having done an activity into a structured written text. The writing process may also include preparing a neat, correct and final copy of the solution to the problem.

Creative thinking skills: These enable children to generate and extend ideas. During the English lesson children are introduced to a wide range of genres, and they are asked to respond creatively by using imagination and creative thinking in their own writing. This may include writing a fairy tale from another point of view, extending a scene from a story, or writing to a character in a book.

Evaluation skills: These enable children to evaluate critically and to judge the value of what they read, hear and do. They are encouraged to judge the value of their own written work by contributing to ideas about the success criteria.

Writing across the curriculum

Skills include developing the understanding and use of subject-specific language related to mathematics, science, humanities and the arts. Pupils are regularly asked to write about their experiences in other curriculum areas, thus developing a sense of writing for a purpose as well as developing specific writing skills encountered in other subjects.

Examples

A science report into how a lemon can be used as a battery (Science)

Instructions for a Beebot to move around a 'town' (Geography/Computing)

Poetry inspired by a musical composition (Music)

A recount of how the French won the Battle of Hastings (History)

A newspaper report about Moses meeting with the Pharaoh (RE)

A recipe and evaluation for chocolate cupcakes (D.T.)

Aims of this Policy

Although the teaching of writing is not confined to the literacy hour, this policy aims to set out how we use the National Curriculum primarily and other documents to support a balanced and interesting stimulus for writing activities.

This policy is structured as follows:

Communication (articulating ideas and structuring them in writing)

- how we enable the children to become active and enthusiastic writers (Part 1)
- how different types of writing are included within topic work (Part 2)

Transcription

- Spelling, handwriting and presentation (Part 3)

Further teaching requirements

- how computers are used to support and promote writing (Part 4)
- assessment of writing skills (Part 5)

Further details of Marking and Assessment, in addition to the target-setting explained in Part 5, are continually updated and may be found in the latest Assessment Policy.

Part 1

Enabling the children to become active and independent writers

In order for the children to become active and independent readers, it is necessary to be familiar with the needs of each individual class, both in terms of social maturity and academic performance. For effective development to occur, the teacher must have a clear idea of what aspects of writing need to be developed annually, termly, weekly and daily.

Planning termly units of work

As children learn to write in a variety of different contexts, we advocate clustering skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening into extended 'units'. This has a beneficial impact on the development of the children's skills in English; the children are introduced to new skills and are given valuable time to consolidate these skills in as wide a range of contexts as possible. To illustrate this, we can examine a (simplified) medium term plan for English from Year 6.

The children are studying the end of the Saxon era as their topic during Autumn 1. Five weeks of English planning focus entirely on non-fiction skills (as Fiction work is to be blocked in during the Autumn 2 topic of Macbeth).

Week	1	2	3	4	5
Context	Harold asks Magnus and the housecarls to go to Jorvik to meet Tostig Children plan route	Tostig and his taxing of the villagers Children help village to resurrect their crops	Tostig betrayed by Harold. Harold marries Edwin's sister. Planning food and craft for wedding.	Harold is crowned King and sends Magnus to spy on Tostig in Europe. Visit to William of Normandy Meeting of the Witans – spy vs. William	Planning attack at Stamford Bridge Meet Fyrd: persuade them to fight?
Opportunities for writing	Letter to Tostig asking permission to visit; how we will travel to Jorvik; what's the purpose of the visit	Report to the village about which field they should plant their crops Advice about what to do/not to do to help plants grow	Instruction writing Recipe for Carrot Soup	Discussion text of the two sides of the argument (Was Harold a liar?)	Recount of battles (Building atmosphere)
Writing targets to develop this term	I use subordinate clauses. I can write formally <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • commas for clarity • dashes • brackets 				

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • colons <p>I use ALL the expected punctuation marks in my writing.</p>
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The writing skills are generic; they can be adapted easily to all of the opportunities for writing. These skills are introduced, developed, consolidated and evaluated through writing a variety of different text types through the topic but are also explored through reading a variety of quality texts in Reading comprehension lessons and Guided Reading sessions. The inspiration for writing is wide and includes opportunities for:

- exploring role play as Saxon ‘housecarls’
- making purple carrot soup (authentic!)
- visiting West Stow Anglo Saxon village
- Creating a re-enactment of the Battle of Hastings

As part of their evaluation and development of the targeted skills, the teacher informally assesses the written work each week. Further focuses on aspects of these skills may be included in the following week’s planning. Formative assessment is of utmost importance during this period to keep a close check on the skills being taught. By the end of the topic, the children’s writing will be of a much higher quality than at the start of the topic and an assessed, unaided piece of work can be used as a summative assessment of the topic’s writing.

Planning weekly units of work

Effective weekly planning in English relies on a balance of some or all of the following areas of English:

- Reading (decoding and comprehension)
- Writing (independent and collaborative)
- Drama
- Speaking and listening opportunities
- Group work
- Independent work
- Planning
- Effective use of computers
- Weekly word work to follow up Letters and sounds lessons or spelling patterns taught

It cannot be emphasised enough how incredibly strong the links are between reading and writing and children develop as readers by being active writers and, likewise, develop as writers by being active readers. Well-planned lessons in Drama, Group work and effective use of computers all contribute to the children’s development and confidence as writers, too.

Lessons within a weekly plan for English will function as a unit, not as individual stand-alones, building up and building on skills and knowledge to enable the children to communicate effectively. Our individual lesson planning, weekly planning and termly

planning is based on how and what each topic offers the children in terms of opportunities for writing.

Our planning format has undergone changes recently to ensure that each class' individual needs are being taken into consideration at the planning stage. On the next page is an extract from a Year 6 weekly plan to show the English coverage.

English	Support Materials	Core	Greater depth
Read Anglo-saxon Boy (up to p. 45)	<i>Picture to annotate p. 40</i>	While listening to the story, jot down facts about Saxon life	Prepare freeze frames to show aspects of Saxon life.
Reading comprehension (Anglo Saxon Boy 45-48)	Mixed ability pairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inference questions • Vocab questions • Find the part questions 	
Drama and Planning	Scaffolded Planner	You are going to spy on Tostig How will you cover up your real intentions? How will you impress Tostig? (Flattery) How will you show your expertise?	
Writing Letter to Tostig informing him of the visit to Northumbria	Word bank for Saxon language and formal phrases	Use formal language	Spicy challenge: Show how you can use all the different types of punctuation learned in y5.
Skills <i>Organise writing into paragraphs</i> <i>Use a variety of punctuation within a piece of writing</i> <i>Use formal language</i>			

Key aspects of writing include:

- 1) Composition
- 2) Planning, drafting and proof-reading
- 3) Punctuation and grammar
- 4) Spelling and handwriting

These skills can be taught in all aspects of writing.

1) Composition

Children learn about writing in many ways; by far the most effective and beneficial to the acquisition and development of writing skills is by encouraging the children to write with purpose about subjects and with intents that matter to them. Good quality writing will only come about if writers (not just children!) have something to say.

Opportunities for writing include:

- Information writing
- Letters to parents about a special event in the school or class
- Conclusions of a science experiment
- How to make... (technology)
- Description of a character in a story
- Re-telling a story
- Re-telling a story with a different ending
- Re-telling a story from another character's point of view
- Modelling a specific genre e.g. myths
- Use the text you have read to "scaffold" or "frame" the writing e.g. substitute new rhymes in a rhyming story such as Hairy Maclary, or add new animals to the "Grumpalump" story, change the words of a well-known poem.

2) Planning, drafting and proof-reading

The writing lessons will always be preceded by enough preparation for the children to be able to write. Preparation lessons might occur in or alongside other subjects (e.g. using a piece of music as a stimulus for poetry or by having developed their own game in PE to write instructions). However, it should not be overlooked that the reading lessons, drama, speaking and listening and Computing work in English all should combine to help the children write authoritatively and confidently.

Different forms of preparing for a piece of writing might include:

- Do the thing you are going to write about! (...make Purple Carrot soup before writing the recipe (Y6); go on a Bear Hunt (YR))
- Story plan (...make a 'story box' for "My Cat hides in boxes" before retelling the story (Y1))
- Story box (...make the Beavers' Lodge from a description in Narnia before retelling this part of the story as a playscript (Y5))
- List of characters (...make Top Trumps for the characters in The Firework Maker's Daughter, focussing on character traits and qualities (Y4))
- Labelled diagram (...of your space buggy before writing control instructions (Y6))

After this, a typical writing lesson must include the following considerations:

Before writing

Discuss the audience for the writing – who will be reading this?
Discuss the tone of the writing - serious, funny, scary, informative
Discuss the purpose

Whilst writing

The learning intention or focus for each writing lesson should be made explicit for the children. Suitable focuses might include:

- The difference between spoken and written language
- The direction and sequence of writing
- How to form sentences
- Ways of joining sentences - also, before, when, so
- Agreement of tense
- Use of past tense in narrative
- Use of punctuation
- Layout in non-fiction - titles, headings, lists, numbers
- Using expressive and powerful language

In the infant classes especially, specific comment will be made on:

- Letter formation
- Presentation features
- Spelling strategies
- Spelling patterns

We use Pie Corbett’s suggestions for teaching key words, sentence structures and phraseology in a systematic way:

Reception

Once upon a time Early one morning	and then next but so until / till	Finally
Description	Adverbs	Alliteration

A mean cat	Luckily	Red rockets
A lean cat	Unfortunately	Yummy, yellow bananas
Prepositions down into over out onto		

Year 1

Consolidate Reception words and 'Description', 'alliteration', 'adverbs' and 'prepositions'	One day First	After that By the next morning At that moment Suddely To his amazement Now Soon /As soon as... In the end
Because ...that... ...or... so that.... when.... where....	Repetition for effect (He walked and walked)	Adverbs Suddenly Immediately

....happily ever after		
Prepositions		
Inside		
towards		

Year 2

Consolidate all words and phrases from Year 1 and Reception	Although However	Simple similes (using like) e.g. the Marrow is long like a sausage
Prepositions		Adverbs
Behind		Eventually
Above		
Outside		
Inside		

Year 3 and 4

Consolidate all words and phrases from EYFS and KS1	Later when/whenever without warning	“ “ plus speech verb/adverb
-ing clause starter e.g. Running	Short sentences Wow!	Sentence of 3 for description

<p>along, Tim tripped over</p> <p>Drop in 'ing' clause</p> <p>Tim, running along, tripped over.</p> <p>Drop in 'who' clause</p> <p>e.g. Tim, who was late, tripped over</p>	<p>Questions</p> <p>Have you ever wondered...?</p> <p>Exclamations</p> <p>It's amazing!</p>	<p>e.g. He wore a red cloak, shiny shoes and a tall hat</p>
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Year 5 and 6

<p>Consolidate all words and phrases from EYFS and KS1 and Y3 and 4</p>	<p>Elaborate on starters from previous years e.g. Early one frosty morning...</p>	<p>In an instant...</p> <p>Out of the blue...</p>
<p>-ed clause starter e.g. Exhausted, Tom ran home.</p> <p>Drop in 'ed' clause e.g. Tim, exhausted by so much effort, ran home.</p>	<p>Speech plus stage direction 'ing'</p> <p>e.g. "Stop," he whispered, picking up his tea.</p>	<p>Sentence of 3 for action</p> <p>e.g. Tim ran home, sat down and drank his tea.</p>
<p>Personification</p> <p>e.g. The sun smiled down on them.</p> <p>The car growled angrily at Rob.</p>		

During and after writing: Proof-reading

It is imperative that in all year groups children reflect on the writing they have produced. They need to become focused on evaluating the skills they are using to become better writers: constant reinforcement of the specific Learning Intention for that lesson is made throughout the lesson and this will be the primary focus in the children’s minds when asked to reflect on their work. However, it is important that throughout the school, in every piece of writing they do, the children continue to think about and develop skills they already have or which they are currently consolidating. Although focus on the Learning Intention is absolutely necessary throughout the whole lesson, attention may also be drawn to the overall composition of the work in evaluation periods (or ‘chunked plenaries’) within the lesson. (e.g. ‘The way you’ve used speech marks here is very effective – I’m glad you’re using that skill we learned last week.’)

As children progress through the school, we find opportunities for the children to review their final piece of writing in a more formal way (proof-reading). In these sessions, the teachers will emphasise certain points to consider (e.g. checking spelling, using year group focus vocabulary, punctuation, effect, handwriting...). As children become used to this pattern, it is aimed that they will become more independent in the process themselves, focusing on these important considerations every time they write.

3) Punctuation

There is a clear hierarchy of punctuation skills that need to be introduced at the appropriate maturity level. From the start, children should see punctuation as serving important functions in their writing. They should see that punctuation in written work is strongly related to their spoken language and for young children, saying each sentence before it is written, and then reflecting on the use of the full stop and capital letter within the sentence, is a necessary and valuable step to take towards effective punctuation. This will occur daily in Reception and Year 1 classes. As the children grow in confidence they will punctuate their work more readily and independently throughout Years 1 and 2.

It is important that the punctuation skills are introduced and consolidated effectively in order for the children to be able to move on to the next set of punctuation skills in the appropriate year group. Children acquire an understanding of punctuation very gradually, building their knowledge from year to year until they can confidently punctuate their own writing. Advanced punctuation is introduced from Year 4 upwards (working towards levels 4 and 5) and **not before**.

There is little point in formal punctuation exercises, as there will be ample opportunity to use punctuation in purposeful writing.

Punctuation mark	Year group responsible for the teaching and consolidation of these skills	Level	Examples
Full stops and capital letters	YR, Y1, Y2	1	I went to the zoo yesterday.

Commas in a list	Y2, Y3	2	I saw giraffes, elephants and tigers.
Question marks	Y2, Y3	2	Have you been to the zoo recently?
Exclamation marks	Y2, Y3	2	Wow! What an amazing place.
Speech marks	Y2, Y3	3	"I loved seeing all the animals there!" my brother said.
Commas after clauses at the start of a sentence	Y4, 5, 6	4	Next week, I think I might go back there.
Brackets for added asides (like secrets)	Y4, 5, 6	4	I liked the reptile house (even though it was a bit creepy) and saw some snakes there.
Ellipsis for suspense	Y5 and 6	5	They would come up to the glass...closer...closer...until they were right up by your face!
Commas to embed clauses	Y5 and 6	5	I found out that the cobra, which has an amazing hood, is a very poisonous creature!
Commas within speech	Y5 and 6	5	"Don't get too close," warned the zookeeper.
Apostrophes for possession	Y5 and 6	5	The giraffe's enclosure was near to the reptile house.
Apostrophes for contraction	Y5 and 6	5	There's a giraffe with a really long neck in there!
Dashes	Y6	5	They stretch up high – really, really high! – into the air.
Colons	Y6	5	Here are some of the things a giraffe will eat: leaves, fruit, branches and berries.
Semi-colons	Y6	5	The giraffe is an extraordinary creature; the patterns on its skin are so unusual.

4) Spelling

In Key Stage 1, Spelling is taught predominantly through Letters and Sounds. This may then be followed up by a separate lesson on word work detailed on the weekly planning sheet for English. Years 3 and 4 also use the Letters and Sounds programme for guidance in the spelling coverage. In Key Stage 2, spelling and handwriting are covered during registration activities. In both Keystages, Spelling may also be supplemented by work using computers. (See Part 4 for more details).

Phonics form the basis of our spelling programme. However, from Reception, notice is drawn to phonically irregular words and these spellings are learnt predominantly through “look and say”. Strategies for dealing with such words (e.g. using mnemonics) are taught explicitly too, especially in junior classes. The spelling homework reinforces the word-work to be covered in class.

Groups of children who need extra support in spelling will work throughout the week with a teaching assistant, following the Letters and Sounds programme.

Differentiation

The independent work will be differentiated according to the children’s needs. The main learning intention for the lesson should be covered by all the children. All children can be successful when writing, and some will need much more support than others in order to follow the same sort of task. Differentiation therefore becomes the support materials that are needed by the child in order for them to achieve that learning intention.

Children with special needs must be identified and appropriate strategies evolved to cater for them. For example, children who need more support can be given a structure for their writing; pictures, or characters with speech balloons, lists of appropriate vocabulary or key phrases, as well as help with grammar and spelling. They may be supported by visual stimulus (posters, pictures or objects such as a story box). The most helpful support they can be given is enough preparation time for their writing as detailed above in the ‘Planning, drafting and writing’ section. For further assistance in planning for children with special needs speak to the headteacher or SENCO.

The most-able must be challenged to achieve all that they are capable of by introducing much tighter and more complex structure for their work; they will not be required to go beyond the expectations for their year group, but rather deepen their understanding and application of the key year group skills. Those children who need to be challenged further may be given a cluster of objectives to consider when writing. A further differentiation is to ask these children to apply their learning in another context.

A copy of the planning, detailing learning intention, success criteria and associated differentiation, is given to the teaching assistant.

Collaborative Writing

Children should sometimes have the opportunity to write collaboratively, either in pairs or groups. This can be organised during the independent work several ways:

- Two children of similar ability write imaginatively together to share ideas.
- A pair of children who have collaborated in an investigation in another curriculum area write up their results together.
- A group of children share out tasks (paragraphs/chapters) in order to write a guidebook or brochure.
- A group of children work as writers and editors to create a book together.

Part 2

Writing within a topic

The purpose of writing is to communicate:

- To record experience
- To explore ideas
- To convey information

If we are to inspire children to write, then we must be able to justify the reasons for the writing task. Writing is hard work but brings its own reward. Only pointless exercises are demotivating. For this reason we try to make every writing activity purposeful and meaningful. As far as possible we link the writing to the topic and provide a real reason for writing. Some of the ways in which we do this are covered in the policy, but we are always assessing the English curriculum and making changes when necessary.

The ethos of the school is to continue to teach from a topic-based curriculum. We encourage cross-curricular links and children are constantly making connections between subjects. We are particularly keen to stimulate pupils' creativity, and in develop a sensitive and mature approach to their writing. In order for this to happen, the writing activities are carefully planned so that we take account of the National Framework for English, but also provide starting points from a wide range – this may be from reading a powerful novel or poem, or from a visit or class experience.

Some of the stimuli may include:

- **An event that the class have experienced together** - aspects of class visits (building site, Kentwell, market), or more generally playtimes, making models etc. Taking notes of different pieces of information about Tudor domestic life for a comparative study of housework in Tudor and modern times.
- Making lists of equipment which need to be organised for a science investigation in the copse
- **Drama** - If children are being asked to write about a type of experience which may be outside their immediate, day to day lives, dramatising the experience as a class or in groups, often helps to focus children's thinking on the particular situation. For example; recreating a historical event - the Battle of Hastings, or working as a navvy on a railway line. Modern day situations, such as meeting a bully on the way home from school, or trying to persuade a parent that you should have a pair of new trainers, can be easier to write about if they have been explored as a dialogue or drama.

- **Talk/Discussion** - exploring with children the different aspects of the writing task and being very clear about what is expected, including the key elements that should be in every child's work. Discussion is also essential to give less imaginative children plenty of ideas on which to base their work. During the initial discussion, the most-able children should be given an extra focus such as using complex sentences within the piece.
- **Access to direct experience** - If the writing is intended to be descriptive, if at all possible, children should have real objects, or at the very least, pictures to describe. Adults have so many more memories of experiences to draw on than children, that it is often easy to assume children will be able to work from memory alone. They are also at a stage in their development, when it is important to be able to work from real life. This applies to writing about natural (flowers, rain, people) objects/phenomena, and man-made things (buildings, cars, rubbish). For example the year R trip to Stansted airport provides an ideal opportunity for writing signs; whilst the Year 2 George's Marvellous Medicine topic offers scope for writing recipes
- **Personal experiences** - story writing can be enhanced by the inclusion of personal experiences, which help to make the story more vivid or the characterisation more real. Children can be taught to draw on their own experiences by talking about certain common experiences that may fit into the type of story being written. For example, if the story is about someone being transported to a different country or back in time, talk about experiences the children may have had such as being alone in a strange place, or feelings they have experienced such as being temporarily lost. See the later section on writing from personal experience for more guidance.

Writing for Different Purposes

Children are taught to use different kinds of writing for different purposes. They are given opportunities to write for a wide range of real readers, in styles appropriate to their intended audience. In Key Stage 1 and Foundation stage, this will be formed as a response to a given stimulus, whereas in Key Stage 2 this will be formalised to cover specific text types (some of which are detailed below).

These will include imaginative and factual writing. The layout and presentation of different styles of writing will be explained and taught during shared reading and writing.

These may take the form of:

- Notices, adverts, or posters for the attention of other children in the school
- Books, stories or explanatory leaflets for younger children, in our own school, or the Infant school or playgroup.
- Information for parents about current topics - information letters, or guidebooks.
- Letters to real people - thank you letters, invitations, requests for information

In addition, children may write for imagined audiences, or as part of a fictional exercise,

For example;

- A letter from a character in a class novel to another character in the book
- A factual report from an imaginary employee of Dunmow Town Council, outlining plans for future leisure developments

- As an advertising agency, extolling the virtues of a new product that the child has designed as a technology project, in a promotional pamphlet

Writing skills general to all pieces of work

Regardless of text type, genre or subject, there are some writing skills that are general to all pieces of writing and the use of which all children need to develop. These include:

- **Awareness of audience** - before planning starts, the children must know whom the piece of writing is being written for. The content of the writing should reflect the audience that it is intended for, which must be well established before writing begins. In Key Stage 2, children will be taught to consider the different degrees of informality/formality required for different audiences, and the most appropriate style of writing and type of vocabulary to use in each situation.
- **Punctuation** (see above, in Part 1)
- **Sentence structure.** Children learn to write first in simple sentences, though by the end of Year 2, they should be varying their writing with compound sentences, using simple connectives such as but, and or because. Years 3 and 4 will focus on developing these structures by experimenting with different ways to start a sentence, and in Years 5 and 6, complex sentences will be introduced with the relevant punctuation.
- **Organisation of material.** Children should develop a clear understanding of the importance of structuring and organising their written material. In infant classes, the children will develop their ability to sequence relevant sentences whilst in the junior classes, paragraphing will be introduced as a means to structure larger-scale pieces of writing.
- **Awareness of the level of detail.** The reader of any piece of writing needs to be interested. One of the most effective ways to achieve this aim is to develop the skills associated with description and choice of material. In infant classes, description is developed by exploring primarily the range of nouns and verbs that can be used in each context (e.g. rather than 'ran', 'use 'zoomed', 'sprinted' or 'dashed'); adjectives and adverbs can then be used to heighten the effectiveness of expression. Junior classes will introduce simile and metaphor *for particular emphasis* whilst in the upper juniors, more developed use of description will be explored ((e.g. expressing character by implication: "The man turned his head towards them and narrowed his eyes to slits.")
- **Speech.** Using speech in a piece of writing can add variety and emphasis. Year 2 will introduce direct speech to the children and in Years 3 and 4, this skill will be consolidated. Reported speech will also be introduced in the early junior classes. By the end of Year 6, children should be able to use reported speech (e.g. He said that he was hungry) or direct speech (I'm hungry,' he cried). Despite recommendation of certain types of speech for certain text types, there is no real need for the children to be taught that one is better for one piece of writing than another; rather with enough input of both kinds of speech, the children in years 5 and 6 should begin to choose the form appropriate to each piece of writing.

There is a wide variety of text types that are used to express meaning in writing and each is dependent on the context for writing. There follows a list of the most common text types and subsidiary skills related to these forms. Children should be encouraged to become familiar with all of these forms and explore using different text types for all sorts of different contexts; e.g. in

the *Space* topic in Year 2, use instructions to write a route from Earth to the moon then write a story based on this route.

Narrative writing

An awareness of audience - the aim of all writing is communication, the emphasis of a story should be on making the narrative as interesting, exciting or touching to the reader as it can be. The writer should have this purpose in mind throughout the work. The texts looked at during reading lessons should give clear examples of this. Helping children to develop an understanding of the need to develop a structure for their story is very important. Most stories will have a beginning, which sets the scene and introduces the characters, a middle, consisting of one or more events (the simplest way to explain these is as paragraphs), and an end, which explains the outcome of all the events.

Skills specific to the teaching of narrative writing

- Awareness of audience – keep a focus on structure
- Consistency of writing style
- Selection of detail needed

Imaginative writing

Imaginative writing will contain many of the elements of story telling, but a piece of imaginative writing does not have to have a narrative structure. Imaginative writing is particularly successful after a drama activity, or after shared reading of a text - for example:

- Lost in the forest
- The argument - a re enactment of an imaginary family dispute
- Morning in the rain forest

Skills specific to the teaching of imaginative writing

- Awareness of audience
- Consistency of writing style
- Vividness of atmosphere created – by focusing on use of vocabulary and phrasing

Descriptive writing

Descriptive writing aims to create images and feelings in the mind of the audience. Children can describe people, animals, natural objects such as shells and leaves, man-made objects such as bicycles, clocks, shoes, and phenomena; waterfalls, storms etc.

Whenever possible, children should have real objects to study, handle and describe, in this way, all the senses can be used in the description. Pictures can be a substitute, but cannot convey certain aspects. For instance, when describing a picture of a waterfall, you cannot smell or touch the water, feel the spray on your face, or hear the roar of the water. Texts used during shared reading should model how effective this type of writing can be. See the section on poetry for more detail about how descriptive writing can be developed.

Skills specific to the teaching of descriptive writing

- Use all the appropriate senses

- Use words and phrases to create a vivid picture for the reader
 - Use metaphor and simile to help the reader to visualise your meaning by comparison
- More-able children should structure their description in order. For example, when describing a person, keep observations about clothes separate from observations about facial characteristics.

Diaries

Diaries can be both factual and imaginative. If children are writing imaginative diaries by pretending to be someone else, they should still remain true to the form of a diary.

Imaginative diaries may include:

- The diary of a character in a novel using what the child knows from the narrative in the book
- The diary of a historical character which can be researched from reference material - e.g. Howard Carter on the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun, an evacuee during the second world war
- The diary of a fairy tale character e.g. one of the seven dwarfs

Skills specific to the teaching of diary entries

- Events must be described chronologically, although “flashbacks” can be used for the more able
- Diaries are usually kept on a regular basis; daily, weekly, monthly depending on the timescale to be covered
- The diary must be written in character. The audience is usually the person writing it, so the style is very personal, referring to feelings, or worries that the writer may not wish to convey to anyone else.

Letters

Similar to diaries in that the writing may be factual or imaginative. An imaginative letter may be written in the following types of context:

- A letter of complaint in an imagined situation - to a theme park manager after a disastrous visit
- A letter from one fairy tale character to another - Red Riding Hood’s Grandma writing to a newspaper about harassment from wolves
- A letter from one historical character to another - the steward at Kentwell Hall describing the running of the house to his nephew who is applying for a similar post.
- A letter to a parent asking them to come and share their expertise with the class

Skills specific to the teaching of letter writing

- The layout of a letter, including how to set out address and headings
- Awareness of audience - should the letter be formal or informal, and the appropriate language to use in each case.

Poetry

Amongst others, poetry offers children of all abilities a valuable opportunity to consider the power of language to:

- Create atmosphere
- Create intense images
- Express emotion

Poetry should be used to enhance children’s writing skills in all contexts and should not form a unit separate to other forms of writing. Rather, with good teaching and enough exposure to poetry, it is used alongside other opportunities for writing and incorporated into the child’s developing understanding of expression through the written word.

The poetry of younger/less able children will not be very different from a piece of descriptive writing. Children need to hear a lot of poetry during literacy hour and guided reading activities.

They will read many forms of poetry during shared reading, in order to appreciate the “feel” of the language, and the way in which the structure of the lines supports the ideas.

Many published poems depend on a clear structure, such as repeated ideas and phrases for their effectiveness. It is easy to teach structure by providing children with a framework - repeated words or phrases, or a model from a published poem, which they can use for their own ideas. Modern poets such as Michael Rosen or Kit Wright have written many poems in this way e.g. “I know a man who can.....” at the start of each line. Older, more experienced children can be reminded of this technique but asked to invent their own repeated words or phrases.

A word of caution on structure: in poetry forms such as Kennings or Haiku, the structure can easily be seen as the ‘ultimate’. The children should be encouraged to see beyond the structure to the deeper, underlying purpose of the poem: the intense, fleeting expression of a haiku, for example, comes from the incredibly careful word and phrase selections, not from its syllabic structure; the ferocity, likewise, of a kenning comes from the insistence of its subject, not from the repetition of short lines.

We also encourage the children to write poetry by giving them the experience of seeing poets perform their work to them. It is part of our school policy to make learning fun and memorable. Visits by professional writers help to inspire and enthuse our children. We regularly enter children’s work into national poetry competitions.

Play scripts

Children can write play scripts to be performed by themselves and their friends, as a puppet play, or to be spoken into a tape recorder, or simply to be read aloud by one or more people to the class. Play scripts can be written in the following sorts of situation:

- Use a story- invented by the children, or a traditional or well known tale (e.g. The Frog Prince)
- Look at a picture or photograph of two characters, imagine what they are saying to each other
- Use an argument - two people with opposing views (e.g. should animals be kept in zoos?)
- In a historical context - Dr. Barnado trying to persuade a group of his friends that it is wrong for children to be living on the streets

Skills specific to the teaching of playscripts

- The format of a play script; layout, characters names, minimal stage directions if necessary
- Action must be spoken about in direct speech if it cannot be seen
- Characters must explain themselves clearly in direct speech to another character, or to the audience (as if talking to themselves)
- Stage directions can help the actors and audience to make sense of the action

There is a wide selection of playscripts available in group sets in the staff room. These range from plays based on existing novels or stories to Shakespeare.

Reports

Reports can cover a wide variety of subjects, and take different formats. Sometimes reports will be based on children's own investigations or observations, and sometimes on research, and information they have gathered from a variety of sources. Reports can be presented as reasoned arguments, with the child giving reasons and evidence for their point of view:

- Maths or science investigations
- Research - from a selection of books, or about an object under study
- The conclusion of an investigation e.g. which playground equipment is preferred by a sample of children
- Evaluation of a technology design e.g. a box for a new type of breakfast cereal
- Follow up to a visit or visitor e.g. "How the Saxons lived - observations from our visit to West Stow".
- Should we use hardwoods from the rainforests for garden furniture? A reasoned argument, putting both points of view, weighing up the evidence, and explaining a point of view

Skills specific to the teaching of reports

- There will be key points/ideas that have to be recorded.
- Some observations are inappropriate to the style of a report. For example, a report on the life of Anglo Saxons after a trip to West Stow, should not include details of the coach journey, or the content of the sandwiches. However, a report on the coach journey should include such information!
- Reference books should be used **when** children have specific questions to answer. The questions should be formulated before they turn to the books, otherwise they will probably copy large chunks of the book with no discrimination.
- Opinions should be supported by reasons or factual evidence

Instructions

- How to play a game - well known or invented by you
- How to make; butter, a pressure switch, a repeat print, a habitat for ladybirds, a clay lamp
- How to get somewhere
- How to make a friend

Skills specific to the teaching of Instructional texts

- Instructions should assume the reader knows nothing about the task
- They should be very clearly described
- Instructions must be correctly/logically ordered

Newspaper/Magazine

In order to write an article for a magazine or newspaper, it will be necessary to read and analysis examples of articles. Discuss what sort of readership the article is aimed at (does this dictate the style of the article?), and what kind of information it contains. Children should all have the opportunity to contribute something to a class newspaper or magazine,

and older children should take more responsibility for editing and presenting the whole thing.

- A historical newspaper - published on the day of the Fire of London with eyewitness reports and commentaries, speculation about how the fire started, predictions about rebuilding etc.
- A magazine about a geographical area - "Holidays in the Lake District", suggesting visits, walks, historical and geographical features.
- Reports on class activities - music festival, technology day - include reports, instructions, interviews, and reviews.

Skills specific to the teaching of newspaper writing

- Consider the readership in terms of style and content
- Write headlines and paragraph headings which summarise the content
- Consider the layout of articles and pages

Writing from personal experience

The children should be encouraged regularly to write about events, happenings or subjects which interest them. The benefit of this sort of writing enables each child to develop their writing skills in contexts independent to those offered by the topic-based curriculum. In this way, children are given a valuable opportunity to develop and consolidate skills taught in other writing lessons and experiment with such skills in their own choice of subject matter. Such writing can also be used beneficially to inspire further writing related to the topic (e.g. having done a piece of writing about a time you were scared, use these skills and ideas in a ghost story linked to the topic). It is important when setting the subject of the personal experience writing that the scope is focused yet broad enough for interpretation by each individual child. Examples of subjects to write about might include:

- Fears
- Dreams and nightmares
- Tricks
- Trusted people
- Celebrations
- Accidents
- Mysteries
- Wishes and hopes...

A fuller list of other topics can be found in Michael Rosen's excellent book *Did I hear you write?*

In Reception, the children will write comparatively little, although it should be of a personal nature (e.g. a sign for a toy they have made saying "Keep off!" or "Be careful. You need to be gentle.") In Year 6, children will be more confident and self-assured to choose the appropriate text type and skills to use to develop their own responses to personal stimuli.

Skills specific to the teaching of personal experience writing

- Consider the readership in terms of style and content; make your reader experience what you did

- Use the writing as an opportunity for consolidating taught skills
- Use the writing as a 'springboard' for subsequent 'topic writing'

Note taking

Key points can be recorded during a story, a radio broadcast, a film or video, or during a talk or visit. The teacher will need to consider carefully whether children may miss valuable experiences by attempting to write down notes. This is particularly important for children who are not very able writers. It is usually better to teach the skill when the experience can be repeated - for example, a story can be re-read, or a video re-wound. A visiting speaker cannot be asked to return, or a guided tour of a historical site repeated, so it is better for the children to concentrate on listening during these important experiences. Mind-maps are used across the school to organise notes and to help children take notes effectively

Skills specific to the teaching of note-taking

- Children must be taught to record only the key points, **not** all the information. This may mean giving them specific questions to answer, when the skill is being taught.
- Notes must be brief - it is better to use few words, cut out all but the important detail.
- One or two words can be used as memory cues, rather than sentences.
- Don't record information that you already know!
- Notes must be written up afterwards, this may mean re-ordering to write a report with a different emphasis

Transcription

Part 3

Spelling, handwriting and presentation

During the drafting and editing process the children should be taught that they should make changes to the original piece. However there will be times when the children are expected to make a final and well-presented piece of writing. This may be because it is a letter, which will be sent to someone, or work that will be included in a topic book or for display purpose. Shared writing can be used to take a piece of work which needs editing – discuss the improvements and decide on the parts which will be written up neatly.

Sometimes, when the child has written a very long piece of work, it may be better to copy out a small section for a book, or for display, rather than spend a great deal of time copying the whole piece.

If there is a clear purpose, then the work must be as neat and correct as the child can make it. The teacher must check that the child has corrected all spellings, and that the writing makes sense to the reader.

Some children are not able to make a neat copy without mistakes. The teacher must judge whether mistakes have been made through carelessness or inattention, or whether they are genuine (this can be difficult!). If a mistake is obvious, the child can be helped to cover it up, by sticking another piece of paper on top, or covering with an illustration for example. For reasons of health and safety, children must not use Tippex.

Children will usually use a line guide under plain paper to present their work

Handwriting (Full details are given in the Handwriting Policy)

Children will be taught handwriting as a skill, and encouraged to take a pride in the written presentation of their work.

At present, children from are introduced to joined script from Reception and taught throughout Keystage 1. Our aim is to teach a fully joined script in year 3, which will develop in fluency and style as the children progress through the school. It is most important that letters are correctly formed and that the writing is legible.

Writing in exercise or topic books will be in pencil. As soon as the children are able to join their letters, they will be given their own handwriting pen, with which to copy out work for books they have made, or for display. Children will not write in biro.

The school handwriting policy is based on the Nelson handwriting scheme, which emphasises the practising of basic patterns to form the foundation of letter shapes. The Nelson Handwriting Font programme is also used to support the teaching of correct handwriting. Letters are formed with a slight forward slope, and a basic oval shape. Handwriting is taught explicitly to all children up to the point where they have mastered all the appropriate joins and formation.

Where necessary, handwriting should be taught as a whole class lesson. The teacher should demonstrate the formation of the pattern or group of letters, describing the main features to be taught. The children can then practise this, before watching the next demonstration. Teachers should move around the room to ensure that children are following carefully. These lessons can be followed up by children practising their own handwriting individually by copying patterns or short pieces of writing. This pattern might also be observed in smaller groups where a teacher might be working with children who need extra support.

Some children may find it hard to copy from the board, and may need to be taught the shapes, but practise from a sheet on their own table.

Skills specific to the teaching of Handwriting

- Emphasise the similarity between letters of the same “family” - c o a g d q e etc.
- Ensure that children are sitting correctly
- Ensure that children are holding their pens correctly
- Ensure that children have placed their paper or book at the correct angle
- Emphasise that letters should be started and finished in the correct place.
- Each family of letters should be at the same height.
- All down strokes must be parallel.

Teachers should look at each child’s handwriting, and make suggestions for improvement, which can be one of the child’s writing targets. For example, “Try to make your tall letters shorter, and more in proportion to the rest of your writing”.

Children sometimes try to copy letters from other styles of writing such as looped letters g and j - this should be discouraged, as our aim is to help children to develop a fast and efficient style.

Pens

Children are provided with school handwriting pens. They should each have their own pen, and be made responsible for its safekeeping. Teachers may wish to label pens with the child’s name.

Black ink is **always** used unless a particular effect is desired.

Left-handed writers will probably find it harder to develop a fluent style than right-handers. Left-handed writers should tilt their book or paper to the right. They should form letters in the same way, but must have appropriate support if they are to be successful. Ensure that a left-hander is not sitting on the right hand side of a right-handed writer, or they will get in each other’s way!

Children with poor co-ordination / fine motor control will benefit from extra skills practise

- Cutting with scissors along lines
- Tracing line drawings
- Following mazes with a felt tip pen
- Dot to dot pictures.

Part 4

Using Computers to support the teaching of writing

How can computers enhance writing?

Computers - and this term includes the learn pads too - help pupils learn in English by enabling them to communicate, edit, annotate and arrange text quickly and flexibly.

Using computers can help pupils to:

- access, select and interpret information
- recognise patterns, relationships and behaviours
- model, predict and hypothesise
- test reliability and accuracy
- review and modify their work to improve the quality
- communicate with others and present information
- evaluate their work
- improve efficiency
- be creative and take risks
- gain confidence and independence.

Computers can be used to integrate speaking, listening, reading and writing. It enhances interactive teaching and learning styles. It also extends pupils' ability to exercise choice, work independently and make connections between their work in English and in other subjects.

For example, computers can help pupils:

- use a wide range of strategies to explore contrasts, comparisons and connections dynamically
- annotate text in innovative ways
- enrich or broaden the context of literary study
- see texts in alternative versions
- use a wide range of analytical and critical techniques
- sort and process text and data quickly and efficiently
- order and arrange text and data experimentally, using combinations of word, image, sound and hypertext
- save, record, edit and adapt their work quickly and efficiently
- retain evidence of the editing process so that it can be examined
- change the organisational structure and qualities of texts to suit different audiences and purposes
- compose multi-authored texts

- select from a wider range of audiences, throughout the world
- exercise choice of medium and design while composing.

Examples of how these aims are achieved through effective teaching of writing

- Use Word to make menus for a Soup Kitchen
- Use PowerPoint to create a presentation to be delivered at a school event
- Use PowerPoint to create an interactive book that links slides in subject order (Year 6: Introduction to the Solar System)
- Use Publisher to make different designs for a poster advertising an event and compare the effectiveness of the presentation; make effective changes
- Research a given topic, using the Internet
- Make videos about what you are learning in your topic
- Write email to communicate with others within and without the school environment
- Use 2Connect to create a mindmap or plan of your work
- Use 2Paint to practise letter formation or to label a picture they have drawn (Reception and Year 1)
- Use Word Shark to develop spelling strategies

Typing up of work is not encouraged as a viable use of computers with writing. However, it is acceptable for children to use computers programmes to write or plan their work as they will be developing both English and computing skills by doing so.

Programmes available

Pupils are given opportunities to apply and develop their I.C.T. and English capability through the use of I.C.T. tools to support their learning. The following programmes will be found useful in planning effective writing/I.C.T. lessons:

- Microsoft Office: Word, Publisher, PowerPoint
- 2Connect (mindmapping software)
- 2Type (Keyboard awareness)
- 2Paint (Key Stage 1: Letter formation/labelling of pictures)
- Nelson Handwriting Font
- Word Shark
- Spellit
- Internet research
- Alphabet Soup
- Podcasting software
- Movie Maker

We also have a selection of adventure games (such as Wild Earth) which the children can use to inspire their writing.

Planning

Examples of how I.C.T. might be used are given above and the opportunities for its use will change for different weeks: one week the children might use an adventure game to plan a story; the next week they might use 2Connect to mind-map their ideas for a plan. Spelling and grammar taught in the classroom might be consolidated by use of Word Shark or Grammar Bug, although this should be for a ten-minute starter activity, not a whole I.C.T. lesson! As this lesson, which uses computers to support and enhance the learning, will be an

English lesson, the learning intention and success criteria should be related to **English** learning. Examples of suitable Learning Intentions and Contexts might be:

Learning Intention (English learning)	Context (with Computing usage)
To plan a piece of writing	Using 2Connect to mindmap what we know about the River Chelmer
To plan a piece of writing	Using Wild Earth to explore the African savannah at night
To write a letter	Use e-mail to write to the Headteacher
To create an effective non-fiction text	Make a poster about the Egyptians using Publisher

Plenaries for these lessons should be related clearly to the Learning Intention and so questioning will be related to an English focus. However, it is important that the children develop an understanding of how Computing has helped them to achieve this aim and so discussion should increasingly be encouraged on this topic too. For example:

- “How will your mindmap help you to put together your writing back in class tomorrow? Is it easier using 2Connect to mindmap your ideas than on paper? Why?”
- How have you put together your letter today? Why is e-mail a good way to write a letter?
- What parts of your poster did you change today? Why? How did the programme help you?”

Part 5

Assessment of writing and target setting

For children to become better writers, they need to be aware themselves of what will make their writing better. This needs to be achieved in a variety of ways:

- Listening to, reading, and discussing good quality models of writing, both of the children and that of high quality authors
- Self-evaluation
- Peer-evaluation
- Understanding and using their own targets

Each child will be given a copy of the Writing Target card for their year group age. These are glued into the front of their writing exercise book. A very few children with Special Needs will have selected targets from that or previous year groups. More-able readers will NOT be given cards from later year groups: it is our aim to deepen not extend beyond their age-appropriate targets, as advocated by the National Curriculum.

Copies of these Writing Target Cards appear on the next pages. Children from Year R up to Year 6 are involved in knowing their targets for the Year and for specific periods or lessons. So as to enable the youngest or less-able children to access these through marking and feedback, we have created a general series of 'picture symbols' to represent particular key targets for each year-group. These are given below, following the general set of Target Cards.

Year 1 Key Writing Skills Checklist

		Date achieved				
Spelling	I can spell words using phase 2 and 3 phonemes.					
	I can name the letters of the alphabet in order.					
	I can hold a sentence in my head and record it.					
	I can write tricky words.					
Handwriting	I can form my letters correctly.					
Composition	I can join my sentences together to make a short story.					
	I can read my sentences to check they make sense.					
Vocabulary, Grammar, Punctuation	I can use capital letters correctly.					
	I can end my sentence with a full stop.					
	I can end my sentences with question marks and exclamation marks correctly.					

Year 2 Key Writing Skills Checklist

WORKING BELOW THE EXPECTED LEVEL	Evidence	Evidence	Evidence
Use capital letters and full stops in SOME sentences			
Segment spoken words into phonemes and represent these by graphemes, spelling SOME correctly			
Spell SOME common exception words			
Form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place			
Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another			
Use finger spaces			
WORKING AT THE EXPECTED LEVEL			
Use capital letters, full stops in MOST sentences and start to use ? !			
Use statements, questions, exclamations and commands			
Use expanded noun phrases to describe and specify e.g. include adjectives			
Use the past and present tense mostly correctly			
Use coordination e.g. or, and, but			
Use some subordination e.g. when, if, that, because			
Segment spoken words into phonemes and represent these by graphemes, spelling MOST correctly			
Spell MANY common exception words			
Spell SOME contracted words e.g. we're			
Spell words with suffixes correctly			
Join letters in SOME of their writing			
Write capital and lower case letters of the correct size			
Use suitable finger spaces			
ABOVE EXPECTED LEVEL			
Use all punctuation taught e.g. ? ! , '			
Spell MOST common exception words			
Spell MOST words with contracted forms			
Add suffixes to spell MOST words correctly			
Use joined handwriting in MOST of their writing			

Common exception words: the, a, do, to, today, of, said, says, are, were, was, is, his, has, I, you, your, they, be, he, me, she, we, no, go, so, by, my, here, there, where, love, come, some, one, once, ask, friend, school, put, push, pull, full, house, our, door, floor, poor, because, find, kind, mind, behind, child, children, wild, climb, most, only, both, old, cold, gold, hold, told, every, everybody, even, great, break, steak, pretty, beautiful, after, fast, last, past, father, class, grass, pass, plant, path, bath, hour, move, prove, improve, sure, sugar, eye, could, should, would, who, whole, any, many, clothes, busy, people, water, again, half, money, Mr,

Year 3 Writing Targets

		1	2	3	4	5	6
Year 3	I organise paragraphs around a theme						
	In stories, I create settings, characters and plot						
	I use the forms 'a' or 'an' according to whether the next word begins with a consonant or a vowel eg a rock, an open box						
	I show time, place and cause using conjunctions (such as 'Following this...', 'At the bus stop...' and 'As he was walking...')						
	I use inverted commas to punctuate direct speech						
	I use headings and sub-headings to aid presentation						
	I use the present perfect form of verbs instead of the simple past eg 'He has gone out to play' in contrast to 'He went out to play'						
	I check my spelling and punctuation errors						

Year 4 Writing Targets

		1	2	3	4	5	6
Year 4	I organise my writing into paragraphs						
	In stories, I create settings, characters and plot						
	I use fronted adverbials						
	I can choose an appropriate pronoun or noun in and between sentences to avoid repetition						
	I use inverted commas and other punctuation to indicate direct speech						
	I uses standard English forms for verb inflections (We were walking to school; instead of 'We was walking to school.)						
	I spell most words correctly and use my Year 3 and 4 spelling words where I can.						
	I check my spelling and punctuation.						

Year 5 Key Writing Skills Checklist

		Date achieved				
Spelling	To accurately spell Year 5/6 words independently					
	To use my Year 5 spelling patterns accurately					
Handwriting	To consistently join letters and write letters at correct heights					
Composition	To plan my writing for a specific purpose and audience					
	To use similar writing models I have read to help me					
	To describe settings, characters and atmosphere in stories					
	To insert dialogue in my stories to reveal more about a character					
	To use layout features to structure a text and guide the reader e.g. paragraphs, subheadings, bullet points and underlining					
	To ensure my writing consistently uses the correct tense					
	To proof read for correct spelling and punctuation					
	To carry out research to develop my writing					
	To proof read my writing and other people's writing and give feedback					
	To ensure correct verb and subject agreement					
	To build cohesion in and across paragraphs using time adverbials e.g. then, after this, firstly, during					
	Use perfect verb form to show tense e.g. I <i>had lost</i> my keys, I <i>have known</i> my best friend since Year 1, we <i>will have finished</i> by lunchtime					
	Vocabulary, Grammar, Punctuation	To use commas to make the meaning clear to the reader				
To use modal verbs e.g. might, should, will, must, can't						
To use adverbs e.g. carefully, however, ultimately, quickly						
To write relative clauses beginning with: who, which, when, whose or that						
To use brackets, dashes or commas to give extra information						
To punctuate bullet points consistently						
To use a colon to introduce a list						
To identify word types e.g. adverbs, verbs, pronouns, adjectives, prepositions						
To use and understand grammatical terms e.g. main clause, fronted adverbial, relative clause,						
To use semi-colons, colons and dashes to separate main clauses						
To expand my sentences with extra detail						

Year 6 Writing Targets (a)
(Used for children working towards expected standard or below)

Working towards the expectations	I use paragraphs in my writing						
	I describe settings and characters						
	using some cohesive devices* within and across sentences and paragraphs						
	I use the correct past, present and future tenses in the verbs I use						
	I use conjunctions <i>such as because, when, then, also, as well, so ..</i>						
	I use capital letters						
	full stops,						
	question marks						
	exclamation marks,						
	commas for lists						
	apostrophes						
My handwriting is clear to read and joined							
Working at expected level	I create atmosphere,						
	I use speech to show how characters feel and act						
	I can write formally						
	I can link parts of my sentences or paragraphs using adverbials and other skills.						
	I use passive verbs mostly appropriately.						
	I use modal verbs mostly appropriately.						
	I use subordinate clauses.						
	I use embedded clauses.						
	I use prepositional phrases.						
	I use adverbial and adjectival clauses.						
	I use punctuation accurately, including:						
	inverted commas						
	commas for clarity						
	brackets						
	of semi-colons						
colons							
dashes							
hyphens							

Year 6 Writing Targets (b)
(Used for children working towards greater depth)

Working at expected level	I create atmosphere,								
	I use speech to show how characters feel and act								
	I can write <u>formally</u>								
	I can link parts of my sentences or paragraphs using adverbials and other skills.								
	I use passive verbs mostly appropriately.								
	I use modal verbs mostly appropriately.								
	I use subordinate clauses.								
	I use embedded clauses.								
	I use prepositional phrases.								
	I use adverbial and adjectival clauses.								
	I use punctuation accurately, including: inverted commas								
	commas for clarity								
	brackets								
	of semi-colons								
	colons								
dashes									
hyphens									
Working at greater depth	I can shift between levels of formality through choosing vocabulary precisely and by manipulating grammatical structures								
	I select verb forms for meaning and effect								
	I use multi-clause sentences (three clauses or more)								
	I use colons to separate clauses								
	I use semicolons to separate clauses								
	I use ALL the expected punctuation marks in my writing.								

Recording Writing Progress

As part of our assessment policy, each teacher keeps a record of writing progress. These records should include the Writing Target cards for **individual** children and are often evidenced in the front of children's writing exercise books.

Ongoing assessment is crucial to a child's progress in writing. Teachers will update the above writing assessment cards at least every half term following a review of unaided work, including at least one extended piece of unaided work. Only unaided, independent writing is taken into consideration.

These guidelines are followed by all staff for identifying independent work for assessment:

1) Allow two lessons (or appropriate) for the writing. One for writing and one for re-drafting/proof reading.

2) Choose a subject where the children can be imaginative (e.g. Imagine a creature has been discovered and you have to write about it for an encyclopedia; as opposed to 'Write about a giraffe/your favourite animal' as this would involve 'fact-finding' obsessions!)

3) Children may use displays or spelling cards but not be influenced by how to use them (e.g. NOT 'Here is the right spelling for 'steak'')

4) The writing target cards or symbols may where appropriate be encouraged to be used (especially in composition and proof reading). However, examples of HOW to show the individual targets may NOT be given.

5) Spelling. Spelling DOES matter. If the child after support/peer work/dictionary use cannot spell the words they are using (at an age-appropriate level) then they are not working at age-appropriate level. Please refer to KS1 and KS2 documentation I sent out earlier this term to guide your judgments about spelling.

6) Handwriting. Handwriting is an important consideration. By the end of Year 6, the children must join to achieve age-appropriate level. You may ask a child to give you a sample of their best handwriting but not necessarily sustain it for lengthy texts.

Marking and Feedback of writing

Further details of this are given in the Assessment policy, including details of how learning intentions and success criteria are assessed and how marking and feedback to infants is given through 'picture' cues.

Part 6

Other matters

Monitoring of this Policy

Indications of our success in developing and extending writing skills will include:

- The depth and quality of imaginative writing, including the adventurous and effective use of vocabulary and phrasing.
- The appropriate use of structure and language in non-fiction writing.
- The setting and meeting of writing targets, which will indicate progress through NC levels.
- Progress in spelling, which can be monitored after assessment activities.

Teachers will monitor writing standards in their own classrooms in the following ways:

- How successfully do children match writing style to the purpose of their writing?
- Is the children's ability to write appropriately for different audiences increasing?
- Do the children readily turn to writing to plan work and organise their ideas?
- Do the children have appropriate and efficient strategies for checking their own work?
- Do children refer to their own writing targets, and use them effectively?
- Is handwriting clear and legible?
- Is there genuine enthusiasm and enjoyment for writing?

Whole school evaluation will include ensuring that:

- Children who require systematic teaching of writing skills have a planned and consistent programme, and their writing is monitored on a regular basis.
- A variety of writing activities are taking place in each classroom to develop the range of skills, which should be taught.
- All children have writing targets, which are regularly checked and updated. The English coordinator will interview children to assess the impact of writing targets on each class.
- There is appropriate differentiation in language activities.
- Year groups are using resources appropriately.
- Individual children's timed, unaided writing shows improvement.
- Analysis of Key stage 1 and Key stage 2 test results show good improvement.

Equal opportunities

Both boys and girls will follow the same writing curriculum. Opportunities for writing will be planned to cover a wide variety of topics, which will be of interest to all children. Children will be encouraged to explore a variety of characters - both male and female, and of situations, in their writing.

The way that children are grouped in class, or allowed to choose groupings should not be allowed to create discrimination between sexes.

Special needs

Children with special needs will be given an appropriately differentiated curriculum. As has already been described, their writing will be supported by the class teacher, and teaching assistant if appropriate. Children with severe problems will be placed on the Essex stages of Assessment, and their individual education plans will describe the ways in which it is planned to help develop their writing skills.

Multi-cultural policy

The library is stocked with books from a wide variety of countries. We have also chosen writers who highlight the difficulties faced by many groups in the world.

Each year group works on a topic, which involves study of a different ethnic group, or religious belief. For example in year 4 children look at a Jewish festival; it may be Hanukah or Passover, depending on the time of year. The children visit a synagogue. This experience allows the children to write reflectively on all they have seen and heard during the visit. During the summer term they also look at books that raise the subject of injustice. The children have worked on the book "White Socks" by Evelyn Coleman; this book has inspired some thoughtful and mature writing.

Year 5 children spend a half term looking at the Hindu stories and beliefs. The children are taken to a mandir at Neasden where they experience a religious ceremony. This year group also learn about life in Ghana: the children are asked to respond in a sensitive and tolerant manner to the issues faced by communities there. Year 1 also explore life in Africa through using the book *Handa's surprise*.

Policy Development

This policy was initially developed between January 1995 and September 1996, during which time, writing was highlighted as a main focus of the school curriculum development plan. Our writing policy was examined and developed during a series of staff meetings, workshops and INSET days during the academic year 2007-8. The ideas in this policy have been jointly suggested and adapted by the whole staff, and the policy agreed to be carried out in this form by every class. Development of our writing policy will continue. Further additions have been made since new planning formats were introduced in June 2011 and Pie Corbett INSET and training in April/May 2011. It is intended that this written policy will be modified as our practice evolves.

The policy was updated in July 2017 and further revised in January 2018.