



# WRITING POLICY

Policy Formally Approved	
Policy to be Reviewed	September 2022

It is the responsibility of the Standards Committee to review this policy and bring it forward to the full Governing Body for approval.

Signed by

Headteacher: .....Date:.....

Chair of Committee: .....Date:.....

Chair of Governors ..... Date .....

**INTENT**

English is a core subject of the National Curriculum and a fundamental building block for educational and social progress; it underpins the work undertaken in all other areas of the curriculum. The ability to communicate effectively – as a speaker, a reader and a writer – is an absolute requirement for active participation in society and all the associated rewards that brings. It is our intention, when teaching English, to equip children with the key skills, knowledge and understanding they need to become effective communicators both in school and throughout their lives.

More than this, we want to foster a love of reading and writing.

In order to make writing purposeful and fun, our English curriculum is closely linked to our topic cycle: we believe the topic focus provides an effective *hook* for writing that engages and inspires our children. We know this approach boosts children's writing outcomes.

All children from Foundation Stage to Year 6 are provided with daily opportunities to develop and apply their writing skills across the curriculum. In writing lessons, children learn how to adapt their writing to suit the purpose and audience. They explore a variety of genres, unpicking the key structural, sentence-level and word-level skills of each before planning, drafting, and re-drafting their own pieces. As with reading, the skills for writing are taught sequentially, building on previous knowledge.

When we teach writing, it is always our intention to broaden our pupils' vocabulary and their ability to manipulate grammatical structures and punctuation so that they can express their thoughts and ideas with clarity, precision and flair in order to inform, engage and entertain their readers.

### **The Five Curriculum Drivers**

The teaching of writing is underpinned by the following principles

- 1. Lifelong learners:**

Through the teaching and learning of writing skills and exposure to different types of texts, pupils develop skills that will allow them to access their continuing education and participate fully in society.

- 2. Embedded in our community**

Through the teaching and learning of writing and exposure to a variety of different texts, our children will acquire knowledge and an understanding of our world and their place in it. The written word provides both a mirror to reflect children's own lives and a window through which to look out on the world. Our writing curriculum is designed to help children celebrate their own heritage and community and to broaden their horizons.

- 3. Healthy for life**

We aim to ensure no opportunity is missed to foster an enjoyment of writing amongst our pupils and a recognition of its value. We do this by setting work that is challenging, inspirational and motivating, in order to help them develop a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards writing, which will nurture a life-long love of writing.

- 4. Environmentally aware**

We believe in a future that is more environmentally sustainable and socially fair and where people live healthy, enjoyable lives in thriving environments. Our curriculum is designed to support children to fulfil God's instruction to 'tend the earth,' and to safeguard the integrity of creation. Our children learn that the ability to communicate effectively through writing is a powerful tool that can be used to effect social change.

- 5. Rights-Respecting Citizens of the World**

Through the teaching and learning of writing and exposure to different types of texts, our children are reminded of their rights and that we are a Rights Respecting School. Writing allows children to communicate and explore these rights, in many forms and genres.

### **The Fressingfield Primary School Aims for Writing**

- To develop children, who are imaginative, creative, independent, inquisitive, inquiring and confident writers.
- To provide children with a range of writing skills and strategies to enable them to write confidently with comprehension, cohesion and enjoyment for a range of purposes, in a variety of contexts and for different audiences.
- To ensure no opportunity is missed to foster an enjoyment of writing amongst pupils and a recognition of its value, by setting work that is challenging, inspirational and motivating, helping them to develop a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards writing, which will nurture a life-long love of writing.
- To provide opportunities to explore a variety of different genres and to be exposed regularly to high quality texts, providing a model for pupils to aspire to.
- To ensure children have a clear understanding of the writing process: plan, draft, revise and edit their own work, and learn how to self and peer assess against the success criteria.
- To develop children's ability to self-assess by reflecting on the quality of their writing, encouraging them to construct informed opinions and implement strategies to improve their own work.
- To monitor writing progress effectively to evaluate, promote and maintain high levels of attainment.
- To ensure that children with writing difficulties are identified early and support is given promptly.
- To work in partnership with parents /carers in order to develop each child's full writing potential.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

At Fressingfield Primary School, we follow the 2014 National Curriculum for the teaching and learning of writing skills in Years 1-6 and in Nursery and Reception the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. We recognise that two distinct, but related areas are involved in teaching children to write: transcription and comprehension. Transcription covers the technical aspects of writing: handwriting, spelling, grammar and punctuation. Composition is about sharing their ideas and thinking about the purpose for their writing. Both are essential for developing lifelong successful writers. It is imperative that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

Our Progression of Skills in Writing document outlines how these skills are taught sequentially and incrementally over the course of children's journey through our school.

## **STRATEGIES FOR THE TEACHING OF WRITING**

### **Early Years Foundation Stage**

- Daily phonics lessons provide the foundation for the development of writing skills.
- Twice-weekly adult-guided small-group sessions are used to support children with their writing. This work is collected in the children's Busy Books. Quality speaking, listening and drama activities precede writing to enable the development of quality writing skills and outcomes.
- A writing-rich environment gives children the opportunity to extend their understanding and apply their emerging writing skills through play-based activities. The integration of writing within play contexts is modelled and encouraged by adults.
- Meaningful contexts and high-quality texts are provided as the hook or as the inspiration for writing.
- Teacher modelling of the thought processes and standards required are clear and regular.
- Writing is linked to learning-focussed objectives, with related success criteria.
- The thought processes involved in writing is modelled to the children through both Shared and Guided Writing sessions.

### **Key Stages 1 and 2**

- Five hour-long lessons each week engage children in the development of grammatical understanding, punctuation, phonics and spelling strategies based on high-quality texts. The elements of the writing process are also taught during this time.

- Meaningful contexts and high-quality texts are provided as the hook or as the inspiration for writing.
- Quality speaking, listening and drama activities precede writing to enable the development of quality writing skills and outcomes.
- Teachers exploit cross-curricular links wherever possible and further develop writing skills within a variety of contexts.
- A clear model for how to meet lesson objectives is presented to the class at the outset.
- Teacher modelling of the thought processes and standards required are clear and regular.
- Writing is linked to learning-focussed objectives, with related success criteria.
- Writing composition is taught explicitly to the children every week. The reinforcement of this teaching is also featured across the full range of subject areas.
- The teaching of grammar is mostly contextualised within the teaching of writing composition and exemplified during Shared and Guided Writing (as outlined in the following sections).
- The thought processes involved in writing is modelled to the children through both Shared and Guided Writing sessions:

### **Shared Writing**

- Shared Writing takes place during whole class teaching, where ideas are shared and discussed.
- The sessions are well-paced and interactive, e.g. the teacher employs intentional errors, the use of pupil whiteboards for the quick composition of ideas and formative assessment.
- These ideas are recorded and refined by the teacher, with them modelling the skills needed to be a writer.
- The Shared Writing session primarily focuses on how to achieve the success criteria for a given objective within the writing to be completed. It also provides a vehicle for the teaching of grammar.
- Children then have the opportunity to practise and extend their own writing independently, or in a Guided Group.

### **Guided Writing**

- Every day, both the class teacher and TA conduct a learning objective-focused Guided Group.
- In this session, a common learning need is targeted with a small group of pupils. Ideas are shared and discussed and then recorded by the teacher, modelling the skills needed to write successfully. This modelling process may be repeated as necessary.
- Children then evidence their progress independently, using the guidance to inform their own writing.

## **THE TEACHING OF BASIC SKILLS**

### **1: Punctuation and Grammar**

#### **Rationale:**

At Fressingfield Primary School, we value the importance of enabling children to become confident, literate individuals, who can actively select and use a wide range of punctuation and grammatical forms. We work from the principle that the ideal methodology for the teaching of punctuation and grammar is through the wider teaching of writing composition.

#### **Aims:**

- 1) To successfully deliver the National Curriculum for Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation to all pupils, as appropriate to their learning needs.
- 2) To ensure that the teaching of grammar and punctuation is effectively planned for by selecting grammatical ideas and principles relevant to the year group in question, and pertinent to the text/topic being covered.
- 3) To maximise the progress of pupils through referring to grammatical concepts and punctuation as key teaching points (underpinned by success criteria) by 'thinking out loud' during writing composition.
- 4) To feedback on pupils' understanding of grammatical concepts verbally and using pupil conferencing.
- 5) To improve outcomes for Fressingfield Primary School pupils in SPAG tests.

#### **Procedures:**

- Grammatical concepts are introduced to the children through the texts studied. Teachers plan to teach the full Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation content of the National Curriculum, selecting which concepts are best suited to each given text/topic.
- Lessons, or sections of lessons may then be devoted to consolidating the understanding of the grammar principle in question. Evidence of this teaching will appear in children's English Books.
- Grammatical concepts and punctuation will then appear as success criteria in writing composition lessons, and as such will be explicitly referenced/exemplified during modelled writing, e.g. through teachers 'thinking out loud' or making deliberate omissions/errors.

#### **Assessment**

- Pupils' learning in Grammar will be assessed against the (National Curriculum-derived) 'I can' statements.
- Progress against the expectations will be discussed with the children via their individual Pupil Progress conference.

### **2: Spelling**

- Spellings are given to children from year 1 to year 6.
- Children are taught to follow the LSCWC (Look, Say, Cover, Write and Check) procedure, when learning new spellings.
- Spellings are sent home for children to practise over the course of the school week.
- Spellings are assessed once a week.
- Spellings are assessed by the writing of individual words and / or by dictated sentences depending on the ability of individual children.

### **3: Handwriting**

- Children in all classes use a sharp pencil or a handwriting pen for their handwriting practice.
- All classes from year 1 to year 6 use the Twinkl scheme to develop a consistent and fluent continuous-cursive handwriting style.
- A 'Pen Licence' may be earned by children (most likely in key stage 2) whose handwriting is joined and legible, and where the child's general standards of the presentation of their work is good. Children making further progress may then earn a fountain pen licence.
- All children work towards the use of joined handwriting in their everyday writing tasks. Where progress on this appears to be slow, additional tailored handwriting support is organised and delivered.

- Timetabled handwriting lessons occur every week.
- The handwriting of all adults in the school should reflect the high expectations that we have of our children.

## PLANNING

- To ensure the teaching of writing is effectively planned, and responsive to learners' needs, teachers plan the teaching of both writing composition and spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPAG) in line with National Curriculum programmes of study as appropriate for the age of the children.
- The meeting of NC objectives for each year group is paramount and learning objectives are revisited and reinforced throughout the year.
- Units of work are either two or three weeks long and cover a single writing genre.
- Every class (Year 1-6) has at least five hour-long writing lessons a week. This includes at least one discrete grammar, handwriting and spelling lesson.
- For all classes, individual lessons are planned to meet the needs of each class, in line with the NC Objectives.
- Clear learning-focussed objectives and related success criteria are provided for every writing lesson.
- Adaptation occurs through providing different degrees of support to enable all children to meet the objectives stated.
- Pupils complete LO-focussed activities throughout every lesson.
- Planning for writing is recorded on the medium-term plan.
- Before a unit is taught, decisions about what content to include will be taken based on a thorough understanding of the expected outcome at the end of the unit. Each activity will be scrutinised and evaluated in terms of the:
  - contribution it would make to that outcome
  - needs of the class.
- The 'What?' and 'Why?' for every activity should be entirely clear to teachers, pupils (and observers). For every activity undertaken, pupils should be able to articulate why they are doing it with reference to the impact it will have on their writing at the end of the unit.
- A significant and engaging 'hook' is a prerequisite for every unit. In many cases, this 'hook' will be the core text being studied at the time, but in its absence, it may be a short film, event, etc.
- The success criteria for the end of unit outcome must be stuck in pupils' books at the start of each unit/topic and displayed on the learning wall. This ensures that detailed outcome expectations for the extended piece of independent writing to be completed at the end of the unit is made clear at the outset.

## THE ROLE OF DRAMA

- Drama activities (e.g. hot seating/freeze frame/conscience alley) should precede each writing task.
- All drama activities contribute to the achievement of learning objectives and their success criteria.
- The skills required to meet these objectives should be modelled to the children.
- It is likely that Drama lessons/activities will involve the elicitation of vocabulary from the children; this vocabulary should be scribed and used during the subsequent teaching of writing.

## ADAPTATION/INCLUSION

- Adaptation should be through the degree of support provided to enable all learners to access the lessons. To this end, it is expected that scaffolded support prompts including word banks will be provided for those who need them.
- The way in which pupil pairings are used to enable all pupils to make progress, forms a significant part of this.
- On the advice of the SENDCO, further adaptations may be made for some children (such as the use of Chromebooks with Clicker for longer writing tasks). These will be discussed and reviewed as part of termly Pupil Progress Meetings

## RECORDED LEARNING

- Each half-termly plan will lead to a total of six pieces of extended writing. These will include: a baseline piece of writing at the beginning of the genre-specific teaching sequence (a Cold Write), one heavily modelled piece of writing and a third more independent extended outcome (a Hot Write) at the end of the third week. This cycle will be repeated for the next two or three weeks but linked to a different genre.
- The baseline outcome (which will be used to set individual targets for improvement for each pupil), the modelled piece of writing and the independent extended piece will be recorded in children's English books. This last piece will be assessed using the 'I can' statements for the year group (or the Year 2 or Year 6 ITAF statements).
- Evidence in children's English books must demonstrate that children are developing writing skills every day.
- To emphasise the specific skills that are being taught, extended writing tasks are underpinned by clear success criteria. These must be reproduced in books and are used for assessment purposes.
- The expectations for extended writing will vary across year groups but will always involve children being expected to apply the skills that were modelled to them, and thereby meet the given success criteria.
- Writing lessons should be recorded at least on four out of five days a week

## WRITING CULTURE

Developing a writing culture at Fressingfield Primary School is fundamental to the progression of the children not only in writing but across all other subjects. The importance of writing is promoted by all adults, and quality writing is routinely celebrated and in order to facilitate a culture of continuous improvement. Teachers and TAs engage in regular peer-to-peer mentoring and dialogue around best practice in the teaching of writing. Teaching staff have access to support and clear, modelled examples of quality teaching from the SLT and other experienced colleagues.

## Wider Opportunities to support a Writing Culture

- In support of developing a writing culture, pupils at Fressingfield develop as writers through a wide range of additional targeted provision.
- The whole school environment (in particular, the teaching and non-teaching spaces) should inspire pupils to write throughout the day (both during lessons and at break times).
- Displays throughout the school emphasize our commitment to improving writing.
- Pupils are referred to or self-access a rich range of quality extra-curricular speaking, listening and writing activities (e.g. Poetry-By-Heart recitals, Creative Writing Club and Debating Group and local drama group).

- A school newspaper 'The Fressingfield Times' is produced on a termly basis, researched, written and edited by pupils; a team of pupil journalists report on school and community events, teachers are encouraged to use the prospect of inclusion in the paper as an incentive for children's writing.
- Pupils are given opportunities to contribute to the school website, creating a sense of ownership.
- Pupils are encouraged to articulate the fact that they are part of a 'Writing School'.
- Annual celebration and focus on Poetry Week and the Poetry By Heart competition and Shakespeare Week.
- Authors and storytellers come to our school and share their writing process with the pupils.
- Pupils enter writing competitions.
- Quality pieces of writing are celebrated within the year group, in assemblies and online.

## LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

- Content on learning walls is current and reflects the learning journey undertaken throughout the unit.
- Each class displays examples of pupils' high-quality writing.
- Laminated A4 'What?' and 'Why?' cards are displayed on the Learning Wall and should also be available for the teacher to refer to when informing and questioning pupils about the purpose of activities.
- Modelled examples of writing are displayed.
- The classroom is a vocabulary-rich environment.

## ASSESSMENT

Assessment is regarded as an integral part of teaching and learning and is a continuous process. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to assess all pupils in their class. We strive to make our assessment purposeful, allowing us to match the correct level of work to the needs of the pupils, thus benefiting the pupils and ensuring progress.

**Assessment for Learning:** We are continually assessing our pupils and recording their progress. Information for assessment is gathered in various ways: by talking to the children, observing their work, dialogic marking. Teachers use this assessment information to adapt current provision, plan further work and set new targets.

**Assessment of Learning:** The attainment and progress of children is assessed and recorded three times during the school year. This information is gathered from Teacher assessment of a portfolio of independent pieces of writing, which can be found in the children's English books. This data is used to adapt teaching accordingly, to set pupil targets and identify priorities for intervention. This is conducted in line with the school's agreed assessment procedures.

**Feedback:** Children are provided with constructive and timely dialogic feedback in line with our assessment policy. Verbal feedback is given during lessons in addition to regular self and peer-assessment opportunities. Teachers provide parents with feedback on their child's progress and achievement at parent's evenings and through the end of year report.

Pupil progress meetings, between the Executive Headteacher, class teachers and English Subject Leader, take place each term, in which children's progress, achievements and areas for development are identified and steps put into place to close any gaps.



The Executive Headteacher with the support of the English Subject Leader will monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning of writing across the school. The SLT link with responsibility for EYFS will monitor standards in that phase.

### **Evidence of Progress**

- In order to provide evidence of children's progress, each pupil will produce at least one piece of independent, extended writing per unit of work (approximately two per half term). The independent pieces of writing will be of the same genre as the one taught during the unit.
- Class teachers should aim to ensure that the 12 independent pieces cover a range of genres across the year.
- Independent pieces of writing will be completed in children's English books to provide clear evidence of the child's progress.
- Teachers should be mindful of the degree of modelling that occurred within non-independent pieces of writing that are being used for assessment purposes.
- Children may make use of wall displays and/or a success criteria checklist in completing their independent work.
- All independent, extended pieces of work should be assessed in detail with sufficient immediacy to enable pupils to understand their areas for development.
- The areas for development identified in independent writing will inform the setting of **pupil targets, which are recorded in pupil target cards.**
- In EYFS, children's mark-making is assessed daily, according to the **Development Matters** document.

### **IMPACT**

Writing in our school is progressive, challenging and planned to meet the needs of our children.

- Our last external moderation for Key Stage 2 (2019) showed that our children were broadly in line with national average age-related expectations (75% at / 19% exceeding).
- Between Key Stages 1 and 2 our children made **average progress.**
- Our SPaG results at the end of Key Stage 2 matched national averages in both the percentages at the expected standard and exceeding the expected standard (2019). We are ambitious and we strive for the best possible outcomes in writing for our children.
- Assessments are carried out regularly enabling us to measure and monitor the impact of our writing curriculum provision in a timely manner.
- Regular rigorous Pupil Progress meetings have also resulted in children who are on track to being further challenged; and for those where this is not the case interventions have been put in place more promptly to ensure opportunities for progress.

### **MONITORING OF THE POLICY**

We are aware of the need to monitor and update the school's Writing Policy on a regular basis so that we can take account of improvements made in our practice, and changes to assessments, materials and government requirements. We will therefore review this policy at least once every two years.

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

- Governors' work scrutiny;
- English Subject Leader's review of planning, recorded learning and assessment;
- Learning walks;
- EYFS/KS1/KS2 external moderation;
- Whole school internal moderation;
- Moderation with other schools.