



# Writing Policy

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## 1. Introduction

At Greenmount Primary School the following statements are central to our view of writing development:

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

## 2. Aims of the Teaching of Writing

- To appreciate that writing is a universal method of communication
- To teach writing as a process over which the child has control
- To promote writing for pleasure
- To write appropriately for specific real or imaginary audiences
- To write for a variety of purposes
- To make judgements about the tone, style, format and vocabulary appropriate to the writing's purpose, audience and genre
- To write clearly, legibly and accurately with attention to punctuation, spelling and grammar
- To help children recognise that drafting, incorporating significant revision into their writing and proof-reading are integral parts of the writing process
- To achieve independent writing of a high quality

### 3. Contexts for the Teaching and Learning of Writing

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

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

To support children in the acquisition of writing skills we will:

- Provide frequent opportunities to write
- Promote an awareness of adults writing in a variety of contexts for many purposes
- Provide regular demonstrations of the writing process
- Model, draft and discuss many aspects of writing
- Surround children with a print-rich environment that they have helped to create
- Include examples of children's writing in the classroom to promote expectations
- Reward and celebrate children's efforts and achievements in writing
- Provide children with time to refine their writing through editing and revising
- Provide children with opportunities to share their writing
- Assist children in the setting of personal targets
- Promote taking responsibility for their own writing development
- Provide opportunities to reflect on the writing process

Within this writing environment, the close relationship between writing and reading needs to be exploited. We will provide a wide variety of texts which will cater for children's diverse interests and needs, and which will act as a stimulus to their own writing.

### 4. The Teaching of Writing in the Foundation Stage

#### Opportunities for writing

A wide variety of opportunities are provided for children to engage in writing activities. Amongst these are:

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

Through engaging in these activities, children become aware that writing is used for a range of purposes. They distinguish it from drawing, and learn the left to right convention of writing in English.

### Developing Skills

A variety of resources are used to encourage the development of the fine motor control which is essential for good handwriting. These include playdough, cutting, threading and tracing.

Fine motor skills are also a focus within support groups targeted at specific children.

Gross motor skills are also developed through a variety of physical development activities and opportunities, including PE, as upper body strength is recognised as being vital to good fine motor skills.

### Writing Development

Children are encouraged to attempt their own emergent writing and their efforts are valued and praised. As their phonic knowledge increases, this will be reflected in their writing. At the same time, their knowledge of key words is supported through reading and writing activities, including shared reading and writing.

## **5. The Teaching of Writing at Key Stage One**

### Shared Writing

Through shared writing the teacher demonstrates specific writing skills, sometimes acting as scribe. The basics of how to form a letter, spell a word, leave a space or put in a full stop are demonstrated, followed by the more sophisticated strategies of modelling the planning, drafting or proof-reading of writing. The teacher may demonstrate writing in a particular genre. Shared writing will teach children how to:

- Develop technical terms and vocabulary for understanding and discussing writing
- Generate imaginative and informative ideas through discussion and questioning, and record these ideas in notes/plans/drafts
- Structure ideas in writing through the use of appropriate language, sentence structure, punctuation, sequencing and lay-out
- Develop specific word level skills of spelling, handwriting and punctuation
- Refine writing to make it clearer and better suited to its audience and purpose
- Publish and present written texts for others to read and use

### Guided Writing

Guided writing sessions will be used to provide a bridge between shared and independent work. During these sessions the teacher or TA may scribe for specific children or support children writing independently or in pairs. Guided writing sessions may focus on:

- Planning a piece of writing
- Supporting work in progress
- Evaluating and improving writing

## Independent Writing

Children will be given frequent opportunities to write independently so that the skills demonstrated during shared writing and supported during guided writing will be transferred into their own writing.

## **6. The Teaching of Writing at Key Stage Two**

### Shared Writing

Through shared writing the teacher will model the writing process, including the children through:

- Demonstrating planning strategies (brainstorming, concept maps, writing frames, story boards etc.)
- Using a familiar text as a starting point for writing
- Teaching the structural characteristics of a particular text type
- Drafting
- Teaching the purpose and use of punctuation
- Demonstrating revision strategies e.g. checking for meaning, reordering to improve structure, rewriting to improve clarity or to enrich language
- Demonstrating editing strategies e.g. checking punctuation and spelling

### Guided Writing

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

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

### Independent Writing

During Big Writing session the children compose without direct teacher support:

- Applying skills learned in shared writing and guided writing
- Revising work in the light of feedback from teachers or peers
- Commenting constructively on other children's writing
- Editing and proof-reading to improve transcriptional features
- Preparing work for presentation

## **7. Other Writing Strands**

### 7a Grammar and Punctuation

Aspects of grammar and punctuation will frequently be taught during shared and guided writing sessions. Attention may also be drawn to specific aspects during shared and guided reading. It will be necessary at times to have a whole class or group session on a particular point of grammar or punctuation. Much sentence level work, however, will be taught through text level work to make its relevance explicit.



## 7b Spelling

Through the carefully planned and progressive teaching of spelling, we aim:

- ◆ To encourage children to become confident and competent spellers
- ◆ To teach children spelling strategies relevant to their developmental stage
- ◆ To help children to understand that there are spelling patterns and rules which can be learnt

### The Teaching of Spelling

Children will be taught to:

- ◆ Identify sounds in spoken words (phonological awareness)
- ◆ Recognise the common spellings for each phoneme/grapheme correspondence)
- ◆ Blend phonemes into words for reading
- ◆ Segment words into phonemes for spelling
- ◆ Acquire a knowledge of high frequency words
- ◆ Identify onsets and rimes as an aid to spelling
- ◆ Investigate and learn spelling before checking with the teacher
- ◆ Attempt a spelling before checking with the teacher
- ◆ Identify mis-spelt words in their own writing, and learn to spell these words
- ◆ Develop and use independent spelling strategies
- ◆ Use a variety of dictionaries and thesauruses to support their work

At all stages, much useful teaching of spelling on a one to one basis can take place while children write. Teaching spelling patterns at the same time as practising handwriting skills, provides useful reinforcement.

In the Foundation Stage, children are encouraged to make their own marks as the beginning of learning to write and spell. As they progress, they may have their ideas for writing scribed by an adult and they may occasionally copy this writing. As they begin to learn initial letter sounds, they start to use this knowledge in their emergent writing. Gradually they learn to identify and record final and medial sounds.

At all times, children are encouraged to develop confidence in their increasing ability to spell independently.

From Year 3, as the child's spelling competence develops, use of a dictionary will become more frequent to check spellings; although it is important that the child can use a dictionary quickly and easily, so that fluent writing is not impeded.

## 7c Handwriting

Aims of handwriting:

- To understand that each letter has only one correct formation and orientation
- To develop a sense of pride, pleasure and enjoyment in their handwriting
- To adopt fluent, legible and joined handwriting
- To adapt lettering styles for different purposes

A variety of aides such as pencil grips are available to support handwriting in the early stages. As correct letter formation and joining become established, the teaching focuses on consistency in size, shape and general clarity of writing. As pupils' handwriting skills develop, they are given opportunities to write on narrower lined paper and develop skills in using guidelines with plain paper.

Cross-curricular opportunities are used to provide real purposes for using handwriting skills. The motor skills necessary for handwriting will also be developed in Art, D.T. and P.E., as well as in motor skills groups.

Children will need guidance as to the best way to orientate the paper on which they will be writing, particularly if they are left-handed.

Particular attention is paid to handwriting in the final draft of a piece of written work, especially in KS2. All pupils should be using joined writing throughout KS2.

## **8. Assessment for Learning**

The purpose of assessment for learning is to ensure that children are involved in their own progress and are motivated to improve their work.

At all stages, children will be encouraged to reflect on their progress and whether they have met their set targets which will also be evident on their target cards, attached to their Literacy books. They will be involved in supportive peer assessment as well as in self-assessment.

In the Foundation Stage, the child and the teacher read the work together.

The most effective marking takes place in the presence of the child so that it is interactive. Work is ticked and dated by the teacher as an indication that it has been looked and informally assessed.

In KS2, some discussion will take place with the child but work will sometimes be marked without the child present. The marking of children's writing will be targeted and focussed.

## **9. Differentiation**

We offer every child access to the English curriculum at the appropriate level, ensuring that children who experience difficulties with any aspect of writing are identified. Support strategies and material are introduced according to individuals needs across the school.

## **10. Parent Partnership**

Many children come to school with an understanding of some of the purposes of writing and with experience of drawing, colouring and mark-making as a precursor to legible writing. These experiences are valued by the school, and parents are encouraged to exploit their children's interest by including them in activities such as writing shopping lists and post cards.

Later, parents are encouraged to participate in their children's writing development homework tasks including spelling.

## **11. Conclusion**

Writing is an essential life skill, both for children's future progress in school and for their ability to fulfil their ambitions and potential in adult life. We aim that children leaving Greenmount Primary School should have received a firm foundation in the essentials of writing. They will have gone on to develop fluency and individual style whenever possible, together with enjoyment and a sense of satisfaction in their achievements.