



## Writing Policy

### Rationale

Writing is a key aspect of the curriculum, and along with phonics, reading, and speaking and listening, it makes a significant contribution to the development of children as thinkers and learners.

It is a central part of the school's role that all pupils develop their writing ability and enjoy the process of cultivating this lifelong skill.

At Abbey Hey, we strive to provide children with exciting, purposeful and inspiring contexts in which to become writers. This policy aims to ensure that there is coherence, continuity and progression within our teaching throughout the school.

### Aims

We aim to:

- Nurture the children's sense of themselves as writers;
- Create an ethos of achievement in writing;
- Encourage children to become enthusiastic, confident and reflective writers;
- Provide purposeful writing opportunities where children write for a variety of purposes and audiences;
- Enable children to independently produce high quality writing across all curriculum areas;
- Encourage children to play with language and write for pleasure;
- Ensure children can write using a legible script, joining when appropriate.

In particular our teaching of writing will increase children's abilities to:

- Write imaginative, interesting and thoughtful texts;
- Produce texts which are appropriate in relation to the RAFT (Reason, Audience, Features and Tone);
- Organise and present whole texts effectively, sequencing and structuring information, ideas and events;
- Construct paragraphs and use cohesion within and between paragraphs;
- Vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect;
- Write with grammatical accuracy;
- Experiment with adventurous and effective vocabulary which is appropriate;
- Apply their understanding of phonics and spelling rules to all forms of writing.

### Strategies to develop Writing Skills

- Both transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition skills (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing) are explicitly taught during English lessons.
- Handwriting is taught discreetly using the Letter Join handwriting scheme. Starting in EYFS through to Year 2 handwriting is also taught through Read Write Inc phonics.
- Within each writing unit taught, the correct technical vocabulary is modelled to children. They then have the opportunity to discuss with peers and apply to their own writing.
- Children have frequent opportunities to read aloud their written work for an audience and are encouraged to have pride in their writing.





- Children have the opportunity to become a published author by having their work displayed in a variety of ways, i.e. sharing with other classes, in reading areas and the school library or performing orally.
- Throughout the teaching of writing, links are made to reading.
- At the start of a writing unit, children are immersed into the genre and given the opportunity to explore examples.
- Children collaboratively develop the RAFT throughout the unit to ensure they understand the intended outcome of the unit.
- Pupils are taught how to plan, edit and redraft their writing.
- Pupils are taught effective composition by forming, articulating and communicating ideas, before organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar.

## **Developing Writing Skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

Writing, along with reading, makes up literacy, one of the four specific areas of the EYFS. The Early Learning Goals for writing come from both literacy and physical development. They are:

- Writing - children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly, and others are phonetically plausible.
- Moving and handling - children show good control and coordination in large and small movements. They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing.

Learning to write is closely linked to a child's physical development. Before children can control the muscles in their hands, they need to develop their gross motor skills (those that need large or whole-body movements).

### **1. Gross motor skills**

Gross motor skills activity ideas:

- use ribbon sticks to make large circular and zig zag movements in the air
- swing and hang from climbing frames
- lift and move heavy objects
- paint with large rollers and brushes on a vertical surface (like a wall or easel)
- marching to music
- anything that encourages children to stretch their arms above their heads.

### **2. Fine motor skills**

Hand-eye coordination is a key part of beginning to control small muscle movements and so we provide children with a range of interesting objects to grasp, squeeze, pat and poke. By handling objects, children are strengthening their hands and fingers, so that they can grip a pencil.

Fine motor skills and hand strength activity ideas:

- use small droppers to drop water on to a target
- use a spray bottle to fire water on to a target
- screw up small pieces of paper
- open and close zip lock bags using index finger and thumb
- squeeze sponges to move water from one container to another





- pop bubble wrap
- push pipe cleaners through the holes of a colander
- prod, poke, squeeze and roll play dough or push it through a garlic press
- pick up small objects and put them in compartments or a cupcake tray
- twist and open containers with lids.

### 3. Mark Making

Before children are able to form letters, they need to learn how to make marks. We recognise the importance to have mark making and writing resources available for children to use in every area of the early years provision - including outside. Children need space to explore making marks and boys in particular may enjoy making large scale marks on the floor where they can stretch out.

### 4. A writing environment.

It is vital that all adults in the EYFS department model correct letter formation.

Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words.

This understanding begins in EYFS through daily, high quality phonics lessons.

In the EYFS, children are encouraged to attempt their own emergent writing and their efforts are valued and celebrated.

As their phonic knowledge increases, so does their ability to write independently.

At the same time, their knowledge of key words is supported through reading and writing activities, including shared reading and writing.

Legible letter formation is explicitly taught and modelled using the Read Write Inc phonics scheme and using the Letter Join handwriting scheme.

A wide variety of opportunities are provided for children to engage in writing activities and independently apply their phonic skills through role play, creative activities, computing and the outdoor area.

## Developing Writing Skills in Key Stages 1 and 2

### 1. Phonics.

At Abbey Hey, we recognise that phonics is fundamental to children's development as readers and writers throughout the primary school years.

From EYFS and throughout Key Stage 1 children engage in high quality, focussed phonics lessons on a daily basis to develop both reading and writing skills, following the 'Read, Write, Inc' sessions.

### 2. Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar.

In EFYS and KS1, spelling is taught through Read Write Inc phonics. Once children learn how to read the sounds, during phonics lessons children use the sounds to spell words. Children use the strategy 'Fred Fingers' to support with their spelling.





Children's spelling is developed in KS1 when children learn digraphs and trigraphs (special friends). Children then go on to learn how to choose the appropriate sound spelling for each word. Children use the complex speed sound chart to choose the correct sound.

As children move into Key Stage 2, the Spelling Shed programme is used to teach the words and spellings rules which are linked to the National Curriculum expectations for each year group. Children in KS2 also have access to the complex speed sound chart to support spelling.

Teachers use a variety of techniques to teach spelling, such as 'Look, say, cover, write, check', etymology, mnemonics, colour coding words, word association etc. Children are regularly quizzed/tested on their spellings, and it is expected that when a word/rule is taught, children will apply this knowledge across all pieces of writing, including words from their specific year groups' spelling lists as identified on the National Curriculum.

At Abbey Hey, we use the United Learning Writing Curriculum which has grammar planned progressively from Year 1 to 6.

Punctuation and grammar skills are taught within English lessons, however specific grammar lessons are taught within the writing sequence where new skills are introduced. Within these lessons, children are taught the terminology and subject content specified in the National Curriculum 2014. Subsequent lessons are then planned for the children to apply their learning.

### 3. Oracy

Good oracy skills are crucial to the development of writing.

Drama and role play opportunities may be provided prior to writing when teaching poetry or narrative. Teachers also plan for talking opportunities through drama, talk partners and group discussion to enable children to verbally rehearse their ideas before writing.

Throughout school, we use the Voice 21 materials to develop children's oracy skills in all curriculum areas.

### 4. Marking and Feedback

Throughout the writing process, verbal, in-the-moment feedback is given to pupils to enable them to make progress. Written feedback is given when appropriate and children are expected to edit in purple pen. Teachers are required to assess pupils half-termly using the United Learning Writing Assessment grids which outline year group expectations. Following this, teacher then plan to reteach identified gaps in future units.

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

The teacher may re-write the child's attempts underneath as a form of translation.

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**Teachers use their professional judgement to teach writing in a variety of ways. These include:**

#### **Modelled Writing**

When planning a unit of work, teachers will plan for modelled writing. Teachers may prepare a modelled text to ensure they include the relevant features of a genre.

During this style of teaching, the teacher thinks aloud to develop metacognition while writing, and models strategies in front of the children, communicating the strategies being used.





Teachers may model writing skills such as punctuating, rehearsing, proof reading, editing, word selection, sentence construction and paragraphing.

### **Shared Writing**

This can take place in any curriculum lesson but most frequently during English lessons. This strategy has far greater input from the children than modelled writing.

The teacher invites contributions from the children and teaches writing skills such as rehearsal, proof reading and editing, and production of a final draft.

This may be the starting point for independent or guided writing.

### **Guided Writing**

Guided writing is an important step in making the link between shared writing and independent writing.

During guided writing, the teacher guides learners at an appropriate level through a number of strategies:

- Providing focussed feedback to a group of learners with a similar identified need and then teaching skills to address it
- Working with a group to model group or individual next steps or misconceptions
- Developing or reinforcing skills taught in shared or modelled writing
- Orally composing a group text
- Focussing on the oral composition of sentences prior to writing
- Demonstrating a specific stage in the writing process
- Encouraging children to extend their writing further by writing effective questions on their work for the children to respond to.

It can be seen that guided writing is a powerful teaching approach and provides a good opportunity for teacher assessment. Teachers will plan guided writing sessions flexibly and will often plan to work with a particular group of children as a result of their teacher assessment of a previous writing task, where children with similar needs are identified. At other times, teachers may identify a group of children with similar learning needs during a lesson and decide to pull these children together immediately.

### **Paired Writing**

Pupils write with another pupil to:

- Share ideas and gain immediate feedback through peer assessment
- Orally rehearse ideas prior to writing

Pupils often write with a partner when working on laptops, annotating texts or using whiteboards.

### **Independent Writing**





We want children to enjoy writing from an early age. Our ultimate intention is to enable children to independently and effectively communicate in writing for a wide range of purposes and audiences.

In the EYFS children are encouraged to write independently using their own emergent writing from the time they come into school.

Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 children have the opportunity to plan and write independently and at length during every unit.

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### **Learning Environment**

Abbey Hey Primary Academy is an attractive and stimulating place where displays reflect current and recent learning.

Class working walls/washing lines include examples of high-quality texts, flip charts of shared or modelled writing, grammar and vocabulary work as scaffolds for children to help craft their writing.

Class displays can also include examples of written work from pupils. Teachers are encouraged to model cursive script when creating displays for working walls.

### **Planning and Resources**

Staff use the United Learning Writing Curriculum resources which sometimes link writing to the wider curriculum topics they are teaching. Writing units use high-quality texts to inspire and model desired outcomes with learning objectives taken from the English Programme of Study within the National Curriculum 2014. Wherever possible, links with other subjects are identified and used as opportunities to develop children's writing using a range of wider substantive knowledge.

Throughout each writing unit, there is great emphasis on identifying the reason why, the audience for and the features and tone of the writing outcome (RAFT).

Children have access to dictionaries, thesauruses, word mats, pens and pencils, rulers, etc. Pupils are also given opportunities to write on mini whiteboards to 'try out' ideas before committing them to paper.

In EYFS there is also a large collection of materials to utilise the kinaesthetic aspects of writing, such as sand trays, foam and ball bearing letter runs.

The planning structure for writing units is as follows:

- Immersion: look at example texts, identifying the reason, audience and tone for the text type.
- Build: develop grammatical, punctuation and vocabulary skills (the features) through focused GPS lessons taught in context.
- Plan: develop ideas the RAFT.
- Draft: write own piece of writing for the intended purpose and audience.
- Evaluating and editing: proof-reading and editing work to ensure it has the maximum effect on the reader, using the RAFT as a criteria for success.
- Publishing/Presenting/Performing: sharing final piece with the intended audience.

### **Monitoring**





Teachers use the assessment criteria to inform future planning, monitor progress and identify next steps.

Children who are identified as not making expected progress will be highlighted for support via an appropriate intervention following pupil progress meetings.

The English subject leader(s) and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will ensure rigorous assessment and monitoring takes place through regular book scrutiny, moderation of assessed work, pupil conferencing and lesson observations.

They will also ensure that appropriate training opportunities are provided for staff, to meet identified needs. This will include regular cross-year group moderation, and cross-school moderation where possible.

### Review:

The policy will be reviewed annually by the English subject leader(s) and leadership team and shared with all stakeholders.

Policy last reviewed: September 2023

Policy to be reviewed: September 2024

