

How we Plan, Teach and Assess

Writing

How English is Taught and Why

We are an inclusive school with high aspirations for all our children. English is the medium for teaching everything and command of it is essential if our children are to navigate the world of education and beyond. We want them to have a voice in school and in society and in order to achieve this, they will need to speak and write fluently and accurately.

We have identified two specific areas of writing that will particularly benefit our children at Langney. One is the need for our children to master the correct use of grammar when writing and consequently, grammatical skills are an integrated part of our scaffolding lessons leading to the final piece of writing. The other identified area is vocabulary. Across both our Reading and Writing lessons, we put particular emphasis on vocabulary and word meaning. This connection between reading and writing allows the children opportunities to apply the sophisticated vocabulary they encounter in books to their own application of language.

Writing in EYFS

A close-up photograph of a child's hand holding a green pencil over a piece of lined paper. The paper has handwritten text in blue ink. The text is written on a set of three horizontal lines. The words are written in a simple, cursive-like style. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the paper and the child's hand.

Children enter the Reception year with differing levels of skill and many children will communicate their writing through making marks in a variety of ways. The role of the Early Years practitioners is to value these early mark making skills and encourage the children to take risks with their writing. As they develop and learn, the children's writing will evolve.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage writing is taught through daily Phonics lessons and four topic-based Literacy lessons per week. Through high quality Phonics teaching the children develop the confidence and fundamental skills for spelling and handwriting. Reception children are taught to participate in whole class or small group talk as preparation for writing and to compose and write independently, when they have the necessary skills. When ready, children are encouraged to use the 'Five Finger Checker' when writing, to ensure they have the key features of a sentence. These include:

- Capital letter
- Full stop
- Finger spaces
- To re-read what they have written to make sure it makes sense.

To encourage children to become independent writers, motivating and purposeful writing opportunities can be found in all areas of learning throughout the EYFS provision.



Planning for Writing

Years One to Six

Our curriculum for writing has been designed to meet our aim of developing confident writers that use the appropriate grammatical and punctuation features for their year group, both accurately and coherently, to produce meaningful texts for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences. Our effective writing sequences are planned to support all children, regardless of learning needs, to develop a rich and broad vocabulary to use in their primary school writing and beyond.

Planning for writing across years 1-6 follows a bespoke structure developed specifically for our children following the National Curriculum (NC). As children move through their key stage, the teaching of writing is planned consistently to balance the consolidation of prior learning and the explicit teaching and progression of vocabulary, grammar and punctuation (VGP) features for their current year group.

Planning

Years One to Six

Teachers use the 'SWALE Academies Trust: Eastbourne Primary Hub Effective Writing Sequences Document' as a guide for planning units of writing that are designed to meet the needs of their current year group and are linked to topic learning or real-life events and situations in a meaningful and engaging way. The document enables the repetition of some National Curriculum end of year expectations and teachers use their formative assessments to determine which lessons should be taught discretely for this unit.

Once the sequence of lessons has been constructed by the teachers, they will select or create a model text that effectively exemplifies the use of all writing features to be taught throughout the unit. This includes language, literary and layout features. This model should be an example of 'what a good one looks like' or 'what a real one looks like.' These are created with appropriate, yet high expectations for the children's own writing and will be explored, unpicked and revisited throughout the sequence of lessons.

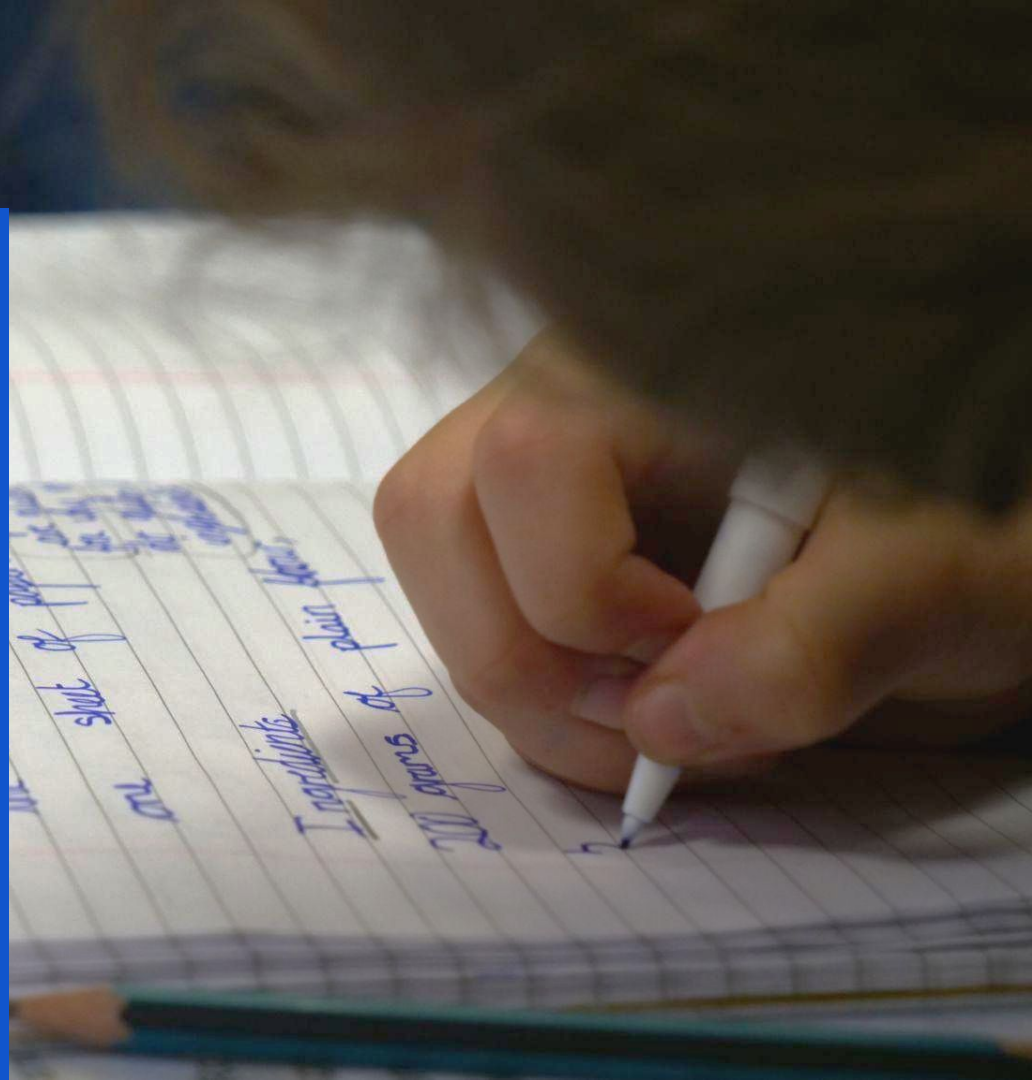
Quality core texts are used as inspiration for writing. As well as the model text, teachers produce supportive resources including grammar/vocabulary supports linked to the specific text type being taught. The reading stimulus selected for Reading lessons is also linked as much as possible to reinforce features of a text type, specific VGP features and vocabulary.

Planning

Years One to Six

The sequence of writing lessons for every year group navigates the children through a journey of scaffolding lessons that will develop and reinforce all the writing skills required to write independently for that specific text type. In every term, year groups teach at least two different text types. All aspects of the writing process; analysis of the model text, scaffolding lessons, planning, drafting and finally editing / improving are completed in a Writing Composition book. The children then publish their final draft in a Writing Portfolio book.

As a form of differentiation, pictorial or physical representation can be used as an aid to learning and use of sophisticated vocabulary in any year group. Deliberate allocation of some talk partners can be used as an effective way to support or challenge certain pupils. The learning sequence itself will permit opportunities for mixed-attainment groups to collaborate during all stages of the writing process. Through thoughtful, targeted questioning, teachers can regularly assess the understanding of their children during lessons, and can encourage children to develop their learning by asking them to explain, reason and justify their answers. Vocabulary support and a bank of sentence starters can support children during the drafting process. To challenge and enable writers of a Greater Depth Standard (GDS), teacher-pupil conferences are used during the editing and improving phase.





Writing Lessons

Year One

Writing is taught daily in Year 1 and the children are taught to understand and write different text types. The text types taught in year 1 are:

- Story
- Letter
- Recount
- Description
- Instructions

Teachers use these sequences to inform their planning. They will adapt these text type sequences to meet the needs of their children. For example, they may add in or take out some parts of the sequence when planning. These text types are planned around an engaging good quality text that may provide the children with a good example of the text type that is being focused on. The teachers also creates their own examples of 'what a high quality one looks like.'

Writing Lessons

Year One

The sequence of lessons often begins with a story or a good example of the text type. The lessons will then follow the 'Writing Sequences of Learning.' Depending on the text type and the sequence of learning, it can be completed in a week or two. The sequence will always involve some kind of VGP focus lesson. Teachers will then hope to see this VGP focus in the pupils' final pieces. For example, if the focus is a letter, a lesson on using question marks and exclamation marks would be included and pupils would be expected to use this knowledge in their final piece of writing.

In the Year 1 classrooms you will see a 'working wall' or 'topic wall' that is used throughout the sequence of learning for writing. Teachers will often use this in the VGP focus lesson; displaying things such as exciting adjectives and verbs for the children to use. Strong examples of pupils' work may also displayed on these walls.



Writing Lessons

Years Two to Six

Writing is taught daily in Years 2-6 and the children are taught to understand and write different text types.

The text types taught in Years 2-6 are:

- Narrative
- Description
- Recount
- Information Text
- Newspaper Report
- Persuasive Text
- Discussion Text
- Explanatory Text
- Instructions
- Poetry
- Expository Essay (Upper KS2)



Exploring the Model Text

This is the first lesson of every new unit of writing and is used to introduce or recap the text type and begin exploring the key features.

This rich and deep text analysis, modelled and guided by the teacher, introduces and models the features and gives children the opportunity to find them in the text.

Text annotation takes place in pairs or in groups and examples are then shared as a class and misconceptions addressed.



Scaffolding Lessons

Scaffolding lessons provide pupils with the knowledge, skills and teacher modelling required to enable them to use the skills independently. Pupils are then given opportunities to practice the individual skills being taught, in continuous prose, of reasonable length - this can be in pairs or individually, according to teacher judgement.

This practice can be recorded on whiteboards or on paper if completed in pairs, with strong examples being copied for the working wall, and live marked by the teacher.

Explicit teaching of sophisticated vocabulary and plentiful opportunities to generate their own vocabulary is given during this stage and recorded on the Working Wall.

The Working Wall is visual with examples and is organised chronologically under the objectives taught, to remind children of their writing journey.

Drafting

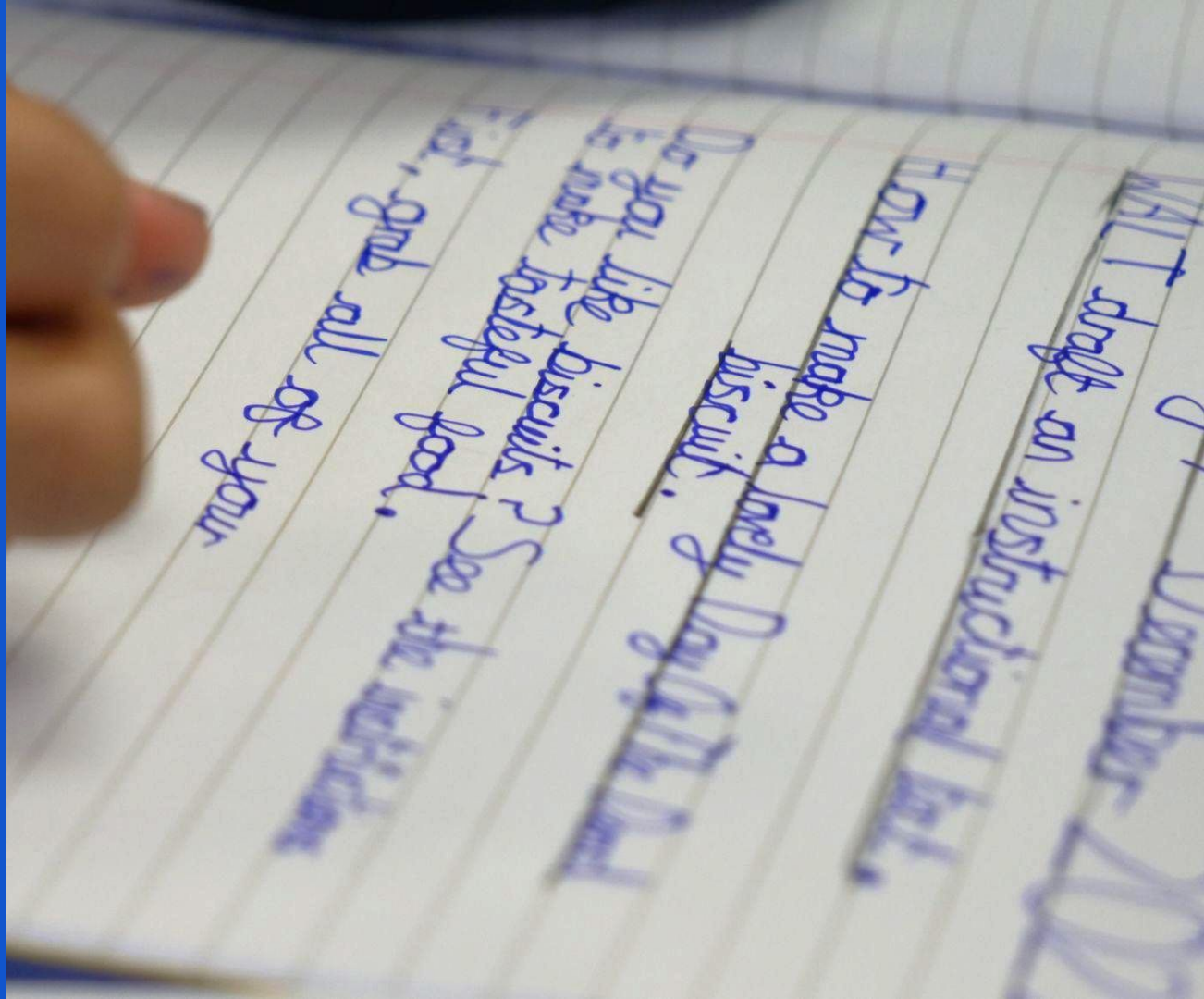
The Working Wall becomes a series of success criteria that should be included in the final independent piece, at the end of the unit.

A stimulus for writing is provided and children write their own text independently using the features for writing they have been taught. Opportunities to plan the content of their writing is provided often in talk partners or through role-play.

Teachers may model or revisit specific features to the class or groups of children during the drafting stage according to their formative assessment.

The Working Wall supports children with vocabulary, literary structures, grammatical features and punctuation.

Live marking occurs throughout the lesson and written comments are recorded in green pen. Children then respond to this using a purple pen.



Editing & Improving

When children are drafting, they write on every other line to allow for improvements to be made in a purple pen. This demonstrates to children that a draft is a work in progress.

Pupils are encouraged to proofread their writing for accuracy, coherency and meaning. This is modelled and/or guided by teachers in lower years or to groups of identified children in upper KS2.

Pupils are given the opportunity to edit and improve their draft with their peers. This can be modelled or guided by the teacher depending on the class's needs and the point in the academic year.



Publishing

Children publish their final draft of independent writing in their Writing Profile book. The evidence in this book supports the teacher's summative assessment judgements for writing.

Handwriting

Handwriting is taught through a schedule following our agreed cursive font of "XCCW Joined"

- All letters are covered - single and joined
- Letter Families are taught - Caterpillar, One Armed Robot, Ladder, Zig Zag Monsters
- Days and Months
- Spellings
- Common exception words

Teachers model a row of each letter / word using lead in strokes and joining. They then circulate to live mark using a green pen to model to individual pupils where necessary. This standard is then expected to be applied to all writing books. We keep the profile of handwriting high through our Handwriting Hero Award that is given out in our weekly Celebration Assembly to nominated children. Their writing is shared, showing their progress over time on the big screen.



Spelling

Spelling is taught using a scheme for guidance and coverage. A list of words are sent home each week as home learning (LKL) focusing on a spelling pattern or rule specific to the year group. Throughout the week, children practise these words in class through handwriting and spelling games. At the end of the week the pupils are tested.

When pupils are writing, certain spelling errors are picked out in live marking for the children to correct and practise. These are often related to patterns taught or commonly used words.

How is the Subject Assessed?

Assessment of Writing in EYFS

Assessment in the Early Years is continuous and is used to provide effective feedback to help facilitate next steps in learning. Key observations are recorded on Tapestry allowing parents to see breakthrough or significant learning experiences. Evidence of writing is also recorded in the children's 'Learning Journey' folders.

The Curriculum has been developed using Development Matters 2020, Birth to 5 Matters and the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2021. Assessment across the year looks to see if a child is on track to achieve the Early Learning Goal in each area.

The Writing Early Learning Goal falls under the specific area of Literacy, along with Word Reading and Comprehension.

When assessing if an individual child is at the expected level of development, teacher's draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement - they are not required to prove this through a collection of physical evidence. Assessment is always a best fit judgement.





How is the Subject Assessed?

Assessment of Writing in Years One to Six

Across the school, writing is assessed against the end of year expectations for each specific year group, as outlined in the National Curriculum English Primary Programmes of Study.

Formative Assessment

During scaffolding lessons and drafting, teachers live-mark pupils' writing in green pen. Predominantly, the teacher will specifically mark the skill being taught and practised in that lesson, addressing misconceptions with the class and sharing secure examples of the skill. If children have made grammatical, punctuation or spelling errors that they should be secure in, these can be marked also.

The main tool used for recording pupils' progress in writing is by evidencing examples of pupil work against the end of year expectations for each year group. This evidence is recorded on a Writing Assessment Checklist which outlines the expectations for word structure, sentence structure, text structure, punctuation, handwriting and composition for each specific year group. Using formative assessment teachers keep these updated, recording dates when a pupil has shown evidence of meeting a particular expectation. This tool supports teachers to identify any skills that need to be revisited or explicitly taught again to the class or groups of children - and informs future planning.

These assessment checklists are then shared during internal and external moderation to moderate teachers' judgements and ensure consistency across classes and year groups.

How is the Subject Assessed?

Assessment of Writing in Years One to Six (continued)

Summative Assessment

At two points throughout the year, teachers use their formative assessment information to make summative assessments of 'Working Towards', 'Expected Standard' or 'Greater Depth Standard' for writing. This judgement is then recorded on O-Track - our online assessment tracker - to track the progress of our children against age-related expectations and termly targets.

Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling Standardised Testing

In addition to the Year 2 and 6 statutory assessment tests undertaken in term 5, standardised NFER tests are used at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5 as a tool to triangulate final teacher assessment judgements, support transition and inform the teaching of Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling the following year.

