

LOWER HEATH CE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

WRITING PRINCIPLES



Lower Heath 

CE Primary School and Nursery

Part of the **Marches** Academy Trust

Intent

Aims

The purpose of this document is to promote a consistency of approach and to ensure that continuity and progression are embedded in our practice.

At Lower Heath CE Primary School and Nursery we aim to:

- ✓ Ensure progress of writing skills across school.
- ✓ Achieve independent writing of a high quality.
- ✓ Model high standard writing to secure high expectations and inspire writers.
- ✓ Provide meaningful writing experiences using the contexts inspired by quality texts.
- ✓ Ensure that pupils write clearly, legibly and accurately in a taught style with attention to punctuation, spelling and grammar.
- ✓ Help pupils develop the skills to improve their writing through a writing process.
- ✓ Help every child become confident and competent in the use of writing as a form of communication.

Implementation

Writing will be taught in daily Literacy lessons as well as through other curriculum areas. To support children in the acquisition of writing skills we:

- ✓ Promote speaking and listening skills.
- ✓ Develop spelling skills through regular teaching from EYFS to year 6.
- ✓ Promote a neat and consistent style of handwriting and presentation.
- ✓ Develop the skills and use of punctuation and the grammar according to pupil's year group and individual ability.
- ✓ Provide frequent opportunities to write across the curriculum.
- ✓ Provide regular modelling of the writing process.
- ✓ Give children time to refine their writing through editing and proof-reading.
- ✓ Use continuous assessment to provide clear next steps for learning.

Spelling

Through regular, focused teaching of spelling, children will be taught to:

- ✓ Identify sounds in spoken words (phonological awareness).
- ✓ Recognise the common spellings for each phoneme (phoneme/ grapheme correspondence).
- ✓ Segment words into phonemes for spelling.
- ✓ Acquire a knowledge of high frequency words.
- ✓ Investigate and learn spelling conventions and rules.

- ✓ Attempt a spelling before checking with the teacher.
- ✓ Identify incorrect spellings in their own writing and use appropriate strategies to correct their own errors.
- ✓ Use dictionaries and thesauruses to support their work, where appropriate.

Throughout the EYFS and KS1, systematic daily phonics teaching takes place, using Little Wandle, to ensure that children develop a secure grounding in phonics knowledge upon which their future progress in spelling will be based. They will also be taught to use a bank of high frequency words, according to the relevant phonic phases. KS1 children have a weekly low-stakes spelling assessment to track progress of their phonics learning. In KS2, whilst most children will have acquired strong phonics skills, others may need further small group phonics support using Little Wandle Catch-up programmes.

In KS2 pupils participate in regular spelling sessions (2/3 times per week) using the Spelling Shed scheme of work, where they are taught specific spelling patterns and rules. These are practiced at home and in school throughout the week, ready for a weekly, low-stakes assessment. Results are communicated to parents.

The importance of the correct spelling of high frequency words and the accurate application of spelling rules within everyday writing is encouraged. Through feedback and marking (both live and following our Marking Policy), children are encouraged to identify and correct their spelling errors using 'Think Pink' highlighting/marking. Common spelling errors will also be displayed in the classroom for children to refer to during their editing time.

Support in identifying spelling errors for pupils should be given and withdrawn in stages:

Stage	Teacher Action	Example
1	Highlight the error the pupil has made within the word for the pupils to correct.	I went on the tra ^{yn} . Don ^t rush!
2	Highlight the word where the error has been made. The pupil will need to identify the error before correcting it.	I went on the tra ^{yn} . Don ^t rush!
3	Use a symbol in the margin to show that there is an error on that line. The pupil will have to look carefully along the line to identify the error before correcting it.	sp I went on the tra ^{yn} . p Don ^t rush!

Handwriting

Through Kinetic Letters lessons (EYFS/KS1: daily; KS2: 2/3 times per week) we aim to encourage pupils to:

- ✓ Develop core strength and fine motor skills.
- ✓ Establish a good writing position.
- ✓ Use a correct pencil grip in order to aid correct letter formation.
- ✓ Understand that each letter has only one correct formation and orientation.
- ✓ Develop a sense of pride in their handwriting and other presentation.
- ✓ Adopt fluent, legible and joined handwriting.
- ✓ Understand the best way to orientate the paper on which they will be writing.

Pupils will begin to join their writing at the end of KS1, developing and securing this skill through year 3 and confidently using a joined script from year 4 onwards.

Children in KS2 will work towards using a pen for their writing. All children should be writing in pen from year 5.

Grammar and Punctuation

Children are taught the accurate use of Grammar and Punctuation in line with the English National Curriculum 2014 through our writing process, using the Pathways to Write scheme of work.

Composition

Children are taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. We use quality texts and modelled writing to provide children with excellent examples to inform their own compositions.

Our writing process

EYFS: Drawing Club

Drawing Club has been developed by Greg Bottrill with the following knowledge in mind:

- ✓ Children love drawing
- ✓ Children love clubs
- ✓ Drawing Club brings imagination to life
- ✓ New vocabulary is introduced in a contextual way
- ✓ Drawing Club develops the hand and the mind
- ✓ Drawing Club has a huge impact on children's confidence and joy progress

Drawing Club is based upon the 3Ms

- ✓ Making conversations
- ✓ Mark Making
- ✓ Mathematics

The following rhythm is followed to ensure that children experience a variety of genres and to keep their enthusiasm and imagination alive:

Week 1 – A story book using adventure stories

Week 2 – Storytelling using traditional tales

Week 3 – Animations

KS2: PATHWAYS TO WRITE

Lower Heath CE Primary School and Nursery follows the English National Curriculum 2014 using the Pathways to Write scheme of work. Each unit of work is expected to last 4–6 weeks. The teaching sequence of each unit comprises of 15 sessions. Each 'session' may take longer than one lesson.

Pathways to Write follows a 'Mastery-Learning' model. Key skills are taught and repeated.

There are multiple opportunities throughout each unit to use and apply the skills until they can be mastered fully.

Writing Frequency:

Within each sequence, there are many opportunities for incidental, short-burst writing with an extended written outcome build up to by the end of each unit.

- EYFS: Autumn term - letter formation and word focus; spring term - one simple sentence two to three times a week; summer term - build up to writing several sentences.
- KS1: Writing of some sort included in every lesson e.g. labels, words, simple sentences. Extended writing (a paragraph or more) once a week.
- KS2: Two writing sessions of at least one paragraph plus one piece of writing extending beyond one paragraph every week.

Children are also encouraged to write across the curriculum, so they don't just see writing as an 'English' task.

The work is pitched at age related expectations (ARE), but there are suggested activities for greater depth pupils in most lessons and for every final writing outcome. For pupils below ARE, planning is personalised using the Progression in Mastery Skills document to support teachers in tracking skills backwards – see later paragraph: 'Pupils Working Below ARE'.

1) Session I: GATEWAY

The first session starts with a 'Book Launch Day'. This is an opportunity to hook the pupils into the context of learning and to assess previously taught *MASTERY* skills. A short writing task is set at the end of this session and marked by teachers to assess the application of *GATEWAY* skills. (THE FOCUS OF THIS PIECE IS ON ASSESSMENT OF PREVIOUSLY TAUGHT SKILLS AND IS NOT INTENDED TO ASSESS PUPILS ON SKILLS OR GENRES THAT THEY HAVE NOT BEEN TAUGHT BEFORE.) Where pupils are struggling to apply and to use *Gateways keys*, these should be built into the planning of the unit to ensure more personalised learning.

2) Sessions 2-II: PATHWAY

In this section, the *MASTERY* skills are introduced with many opportunities along the way to practise and apply these skills in different writing tasks. The tasks use genres that the pupils will be most familiar with such as character or setting descriptions, dialogue or diary entries. Some of these lessons may be combined, omitted or extended to ensure each unit of work, including a planned, drafted and edited Writeaway piece, is completed by each school holiday.

3) Sessions 12-15: WRITEAWAY

This final section of the sequence comprises of 4 sessions. It begins with sectioning and sequencing texts using a model to produce a plan. Two sessions are allocated for the writing of the text in the Writeaway, but this may be extended depending on the year group and what is being written. Within the Writeaway, pupils are encouraged to independently plan, write, check, edit, re-draft and publish as required, with the focus on using and applying the mastery skills they have been taught. One Writeaway piece is published per term.

The Keys: Gateway, Mastery and Feature

The keys are listed at the start of each unit.

GATEWAY KEYS are the skills that should have been previously taught (non-negotiables).

MASTERY KEYS are the main skills that will be focused on throughout the unit.

FEATURE KEYS are the features of the writing genre that is the outcome for each unit. Each set of Feature keys has the same structure: vocabulary of the genre, how sentences and tenses are used and the overall structure of each one.

Working Wall

All classes contain a working wall for children to refer to during their writing, with a view to developing their independence. They contain modelled examples of mastery and feature keys along with key vocabulary. The walls are added to through the unit of work.

Developing Vocabulary

Drawing Club, Curious Quests and Pathways to Write build in extensive opportunities to develop and apply vocabulary. Vocabulary boxes are in every unit and give guidance on tiers of vocabulary and of the vocabulary that is developed within the unit. This includes opportunities for application of the word list words for years 3/4 and years 5/6 and common exception words (CEW) for year 1 and year 2.

Teachers select 'challenge' words for children to use appropriately in their writing. For older children, these words will simply be displayed on the screen or working wall. Younger children will be asked to write them on their whiteboards (providing additional practice) then rub them off once they have been used (to generate motivation). Using these challenge words may be one of the success criteria of the lesson. In EYFS and KS1 as part of Drawing Club, children are challenged to use tricky words in their writing.

All children have access to an age-appropriate list of CEW or word list to refer to either in their books, on the working wall or as a word mat on their tables. Our EYFS children take part in regular 'Drawing Club' lessons where they are encouraged to write words or sentences including words as a code to enable their drawing to carry out an action.

Wordaware and Word Shed are also used in classes to develop children's vocabulary.

- EYFS / KS1: daily sessions to learn one key word each week.
- KS2: Daily sessions involving weekly spelling words and up to 10 new vocabulary words across all curriculum subjects.

Modelling writing

Teachers value the importance of modelled writing and use the gradual release of responsibility model:

- a) Teacher has full control.
- b) Teacher has overall control but looks to pupils to contribute their ideas linked to key skills.
- c) Pupils work in pairs and share control of their writing.
- d) Pupils write independently.

During this process teachers will talk about the purpose and tone of the writing, orally rehearse sentences and language choices before writing them down. They will also model re-reading writing to check for sense and adjust word choices.

Pupils Working Below ARE

It is recognised that children will have differing experiences of Literacy and consequently differing ability. Throughout the course of a child's education it may become apparent that they require additional support to ensure appropriate progress with Literacy skills. We aim to provide suitably modified or adapted teaching and learning opportunities, to ensure that all our pupils make good individual progress.

The document *PROGRESSION IN MASTERY SKILLS* supports teachers in tracking skills backwards for pupils working below age-related expectations. For example, if pupils in year 5 are not ready to be using relative clauses (if this is one of the mastery keys), tracking back through the document might take the focus back to year 1, if this is where the pupil is working at. They would then be encouraged to focus on joining clauses using *and* instead of relative clauses.

Proof-Reading

Teachers explicitly model proof-reading processes - checking work for punctuation and spelling errors as well as checking for grammatical accuracy e.g. consistent tense, accurate Standard English.

With an age-appropriate checklist for support, children are taught to 'CPSV' which means systematically proof reading and editing their writing to correct the 'non-negotiables' (Gateway keys):

- Capitalisation
- Punctuation
- Spelling
- Vocabulary (editing – see next paragraph)

They first do this independently then work with a partner to see if further amendments can be made.

Editing

Teachers explicitly model the editing process - making changes to vocabulary and grammar in order to make their writing more interesting to read. Children are taught the editing process using the 'Charlotte Raby Wise Words' approach. Systematically, children identify key word classes and attempt to improve them in this order, according to their appropriate stage of development:

- 1) Verbs
- 2) Nouns
- 3) Pronouns
- 4) Prepositions
- 5) Adverbs and adverbials
- 6) Adjectives

For both proof-reading and editing amendments, children use a green pen.

Scaffolding and support

Various methods are used to provide children with additional scaffolding and support. All methods are aimed at increasing children's independence.

- ✓ Working wall displays give examples of mastery and feature keys.
- ✓ Children are provided with CPSV checklists to use when editing and proofreading.
- ✓ Children are provided with a 'writing checklist' giving examples of key aspect of age-appropriate writing

Impact

Assessment

Assessment for learning takes place during lessons through questioning, peer-supported modelling and through reviewing children's writing as a class, 1-1, or through marking. At all stages, children will be encouraged to reflect on their progress and whether they have met the shared success criteria.

Marking and Feedback

Much effective marking or feedback should take place in the presence of the child so that it is interactive.

- EYFS: all marking is done live, in the presence of the child
- In all other year groups, all pieces of writing completed by children will be marked either live, with the child or after the lesson, giving written corrections.

The marking of writing is done in accordance with Lower Heath CE Primary School and Nursery's Marking Policy. Children are encouraged to proof read their writing during the lesson before teachers mark their books to identify achievement of success criteria and to highlight letter formation, spelling and punctuation errors for correction.

The teacher will:

- ✓ Mark every piece of writing either in the presence of the child or after the lesson.
- ✓ Mark work specifically to the stated success criteria.
- ✓ Provide any next steps for learning either linked specifically to the success criteria or in line with the marking policy.
- ✓ Use the class Feedback Journal system to identify any common misconceptions and adapt the next lesson accordingly.
- ✓ Give time and opportunity to children to reflect on marking and feedback, allowing them to make any necessary edits and apply advice to future learning.
- ✓ Identify work to 'Praise and Share' in accordance with the Marking and Feedback Policy.

End of Unit Assessment

After every Pathways to Write unit, teachers assess the Writeaway piece of work against the National Curriculum Standards for the relevant year group using the Pathways assessment grids. An assessment sheet is kept for each child, where teachers will date independent evidence seen for each of the standards. This will then feed into the school's termly data tracking system to help monitor the progress of all pupils, as well as give clear indications of the next steps for teaching and learning.