



Our Writing Policy

Also see information on Phonics, Reading, Handwriting and Spelling

Intent

At both Norton and West Chinnock Primary School, we recognise that English is integral to all aspects of life and we endeavour to ensure that our children develop a lifelong, healthy and enthusiastic attitude towards writing. The skill of writing enables pupils to communicate with themselves and others, while documenting and conveying their knowledge and ideas. English encourages self-expression and children's higher order thinking skills to develop. We create a culture of writing in our school that ensures that our children are given the best opportunity to build their capacity and confidence in a range of writing styles.

Our aims:

- Deliver an engaging and exciting curriculum that helps to develop a love of writing and inspires children to want to write.
- Encourage children to be imaginative and to bring this to their writing.
- Provide children with essential skills in grammar, spelling, punctuation and composition that will be life-long.
- Support children to express their thoughts and ideas clearly and creatively through the written word
- Support children to be confident communicators who express themselves in discussions as well as writing
- Develop children into writers with an understanding of the writing process, including editing to improve their work
- Create a culture where children love to write, love to read and take pride in their English outcomes.

Implementation

At Norton and West Chinnock Primary Schools, we are following the 2014 National Curriculum for the teaching and learning of English. We are committed to raising the standards of children's writing to ensure that all children are progressing and achieving at least in line with national expectations. The curriculum will be monitored by the English Leader of Learning to ensure that it is being used effectively to provide challenge, stimulation and excitement to improve the standards of writing from year 1 to year 6. In EYFS, the EYFS Leader of Learning will monitor the standards in writing.

Writing for a range of purposes

In KS1 children begin writing for a range of purposes and audiences. This is furthered in KS2, where children enhance their craft and their understanding of genre. In KS2, the writing purposes (see diagram) are repeated throughout the year to build a solid understand of text type and the features of each genre. This also gives the children time to build the spelling, grammar and punctuation knowledge alongside text type.

Punctuation and Grammar

Across the classes, precise grammatical terminology is taught alongside the teaching of writing. This teaches the children to apply their learning quickly and in the correct context. Our federation progressions are used to track grammar content. Stand-alone grammar lessons are taught if required, but particularly in Summer Term in Y6, in preparation for SATs, as a booster to key terminology.



Clear Writing Process

Across the classes, lessons are clearly structured to allow children to develop the key knowledge and skills. Effective composition involves forming, articulating and communicating ideas, before organising them coherently for the reader. This requires clarity; awareness of audience, purpose and context and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary, spelling and grammar. Lessons in KS1 are structured to allow children time to discuss idea for writing before forming written pieces. Children are taught essential knowledge and skills to craft a piece of writing over time in order to build stamina, and sufficient time is given to ensure quality written outcomes. In KS2, teachers guide children through a clear writing process and children have the opportunity to generate ideas, plan, draft and edit and publish their writing.

High quality texts and stimuli

Children have access to high quality texts and visual stimuli which spark their imagination and inspire their ideas for writing. Texts are used to explore layout for specific genres, as well as language. Drama is used to spark ideas

Learning about poetry

Children explore a range of poetry in KS1 and KS2. Specific poetry types are taught across the key stage. Most types are repeated in lower KS1 and UKS2 so that children can be secure in their understanding and use of poetry technique specific to each type. We have a poetry progression to ensure that children cover a range of poetry types both in reading and writing.

Vocabulary Development

In KS1, vocabulary is explored in texts and collected for writing. In KS2, children are encouraged to draw upon what they read and to “magpie” vocabulary from shared texts. All classes use vocabulary walls or word mats to showcase words that have been discussed. KS2 children also use thesauruses and dictionaries to improve vocabulary choices in their writing.

Accurate Spelling

In KS1, the Read, Write Inc. Programme is used to teach phonics and the accompanying phonetics spellings. Year 2 follow Read, Write Inc. if they are assessed to do so, otherwise their learning moves to spelling rules (taught in the same way as KS2). In KS2, spelling is taught using the Spelling Shed spelling scheme. Each child is designated to a spelling group: a weekly spelling lesson is taught by the teacher. This is supplemented by word searches, writing practice and the online platform. KS2 children are tested weekly on spelling and class teachers are responsible for monitoring progress. The Spelling Shed scheme is also available at home.

Cursive Handwriting

See also information on Handwriting.

Correct letter formation is taught in EYFS and it is practised daily. Once Year 1 are confident with printed letter, they are introduced to cursive handwriting, which is further developed in Year 2. In KS2, handwriting is taught weekly to ensure the majority of children are writing accurately using cursive. Handwriting is reinforced through modelling as children become able.



Oracy and drama development

In KS1, for children to become fluent, creative writers they are encouraged to express their ideas through speaking and listening. Opportunities such as: partner talk, role play and hot-seating are used. This makes for a lively, interactive learning environment also giving the children the tools and knowledge to be successful in writing. In KS2, drama techniques are explored and repeated to enhance children's spoken language and act as a stimuli for writing. Children also have the opportunity to enhance their spoken language through presentations, performances and debates.

Quality editing and publishing

In KS1 and KS2, we use purple polishing pens to make edits and additions to our work. In year 2, they begin to do this independently but beforehand this is a guided task. KS2 children are encouraged to proof-read their writing, and then edit following a set criteria. Teachers allow time for some of the writing to be published post-editing. This is done creatively and gives the children a sense of purpose for their writing.

Teaching Approaches:

Shared Writing

Shared Writing takes place during whole class teaching, where ideas are shared and discussed. It is led by an adult and an adult as the scribe. The sessions are well-paced and interactive. During the shared write, 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 practice and extend their own writing independently, or in a guided group when they return to their own independent work. A shared write is not the same as a modelled write as a modelled write is given to the children, rather than worked on and achieved alongside them.

Guided Writing

Where it is necessary and relevant, an adult conducts a learning objective-focused guided group which is smaller than the whole-class shared write. In this session, a common learning need is targeted with a small group of pupils. The children's 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.

Differentiation/Inclusion

Differentiation should be through the degree of support provided to enable all learners to access the lessons. To this end, it is expected that learning uses support prompts including word banks, sentence strips and model texts. This should be in place for all learners that need them. The way in which pupil pairings (where relevant) are used to enable all pupils to make progress, forms a significant part of this. Where possible, intervention strategies should be used in the classroom to promote transition of skill and support the child. For example, colourful semantics.

Writing Culture

Developing a writing culture at Norton and West Chinnock 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 amongst staff.



Wider Opportunities to support a Writing Culture

- A school newspaper is produced on a half-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.
- Annual celebration and focus on events such as Poetry Week and Shakespeare Week.
- Pupils enter writing competitions.
- Quality pieces of writing are celebrated within the year group, in assemblies/services and online where appropriate.

Independent Writing

In Early Years, making independent writing is a fun activity and is a great way of helping children forge a positive relationship with writing and literacy. The opportunity for independent writing is freely available to children at this stage of learning. In KS1 and KS2, when our learners are ready, children are given the opportunity to write independently twice per half term. Independent writing is a time to write and utilise the strategies and understandings gained through whole class, small group and one-to-one instruction and it allows for teachers to make accurate assessment of the children in their class using the Somerset Literacy Network assessment grids.

Somerset Literacy Network (SLN) Assessment

At both Norton and West Chinnock Primary School we use the SLN grids to assess progress on independent writing. They support us with moderating writing across our schools and ensuring good progress throughout the year.

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 when it is relevant
- *Learning Wall* to be used to refer back to previous learning and key writing features for the current genre
- Modelled examples are displayed and are relevant to specific learning groups
- The classroom is a vocabulary-rich environment

Impact

- Writing is developed from good ideas and is imaginative. It uses ambitious vocabulary and is built on each lesson
- Children are engaged in their writing and are thoughtful in lessons. They love to write and take pride in it too.
- Children have skills relevant to their age, in a wide range of genres.
- Children have good communication skills; they can articulate themselves.
- Children have strong writing skills that allow them to access the whole curriculum and transition to secondary with confidence.
- Writing is high-quality and presented in a number of different ways and formats.
- Children understand the writing process, and that it helps them to make good progress. A high number reach age-related expectations.



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.