



# Writing Policy

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# Barley Lane Primary School

## Writing Policy

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### Aims

We aim to **B**elieve in Ourselves, **L**earn together, **P**ersevere and **S**ucceed. In order to achieve this, and to achieve national standards for all of our children, we aim that our children:

- Communicate clearly and respectfully
- Have a good knowledge of the world and how history has impacted on this
- Develop cultural appreciation through rich and valuable experiences
- Show resilience, especially when faced with new situations

Our curriculum is underpinned by our five core values: Compassion, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility and Resilience. We aim to widen the life experiences for our children, with a particular focus on cultural and creative experiences. It is our intention that we provide regular opportunities for our children to visit different places of interest, experience the work of different international artists and to visit museums and places within their locality. These are designed to be memorable learning experiences which help to build character.

### Intent

At Barley Lane Primary School, we deliver an engaging, innovative writing curriculum, linked to our reading and foundation subject curriculum, which enables and empowers children's written and oral communication and creativity. Our writing curriculum also reflects current ideas which are prevalent within our society today such as sustainability and diversity. We aim for all children to be avid and enthusiastic writers wanting to develop their skills. Writing is taught in a cross curricular way linking to most other parts of the curriculum centring on the development and application of vocabulary.

By the time children leave Barley Lane we aim for them to;

- Think about the purpose of their writing, the audience that they are writing for and be able to adapt their style of language and use of vocabulary for this.
- Have the ability to write fluently and use a writer's voice.
- Use ambitious, engaging and appropriate vocabulary, which is suited to the style of writing being used and therefore know how to change from one style/genre to another fluidly.
- Be accomplished in the editing and redrafting process meaning they are able to both self and peer assess their own and other children's/author's work. They will be able to do this in terms of up levelling their own vocabulary, punctuation grammar and style.

## **Implementation**

To support children in moving towards independent writing we provide a wide range of activities including use of film and imagery, modelled, shared and guided writing, peer editing and discussion. Through early writing, children are encouraged to write familiar and unfamiliar words using the phonics learnt. High frequency words are constantly modelled and displayed for children to become familiar with. By the end of KS1, children are able to write in a variety of different styles ranging from narratives to letter writing. These acquired skills are further complimented as children transition from KS1 to KS2. Furthermore, talk and discussion prior to writing is used to encourage pupils to express their ideas, exchange ideas and to develop vocabulary that is more sophisticated. In addition, we provide opportunities for writing for purpose and we encourage pupils to see themselves as authors. All teachers expect the highest standard of writing from the children when writing in all subjects.

As we believe consistency and well-taught English is the bedrock of a valuable education, at Barley Lane we ensure that the teaching of writing is purposeful, robust and shows clear progression for all children. In line with the national curriculum, we ensure that each year group is teaching the grammar, punctuation and spelling objectives required for that age group. As well as teaching the objectives, teachers are able to embed the skills throughout the year in cross-curricular writing opportunities and ensure that most children are achieving the objectives at the expected level and that some children can achieve at a greater depth standard.

All children, including SEND are provided with opportunities to develop their writing skills. Teacher may focus on appropriate objectives from other year groups or pre-key stage targets to plan activities to meet the needs of children. Resources are adapted and created to support children's writing development as well as to challenge when needed. Targets from individual education plans are also used to support planning for SEND pupils.

Vocabulary is developed across all key stages through use of texts in English lessons and across all areas of the curriculum linked to each year group's big question. New vocabulary is introduced to the children and is displayed in the classrooms, both on the walls and through the use of word mats, to support the children when they are writing. In EYFS and KS1 phonic displays support the children as well. Word Aware supports the introduction of vocabulary in EYFS and KS1 with the children given opportunities to repeat the words. Meanings of new words introduced are discussed with the children and visited regularly to ensure understanding.

## **Handwriting**

In EYFS handwriting is taught three times a week in whole class directed sessions. In Reception in daily phonics lessons the children take part in writing towards the end of the lesson where there is adult direction and modelling of accurate letter formation. In EYFS the children are taught cursive handwriting which feeds through the whole school. This is to aid joining of letters when they move to KS1.

In KS1, handwriting is taught two-three times a week within approximately 15-minute sessions. Children are taught how to form lower case letters, upper case letters, ascenders and descenders correctly using the cursive style and follow on in Year 2 with learning joins in accordance with the handwriting policy. Children use a handwriting book and correct letter formation and joins are encouraged through all writing tasks.

At Barley Lane, handwriting in KS2 is taught on a weekly basis for 25 minutes and children have their own handwriting book. The joins are taught and this is reinforced when teachers mark the books. Children with consistently accurate handwriting can fill in a Pen Licence form and if judged to be good enough, receive a Pen Licence.

## **Spelling**

At Barley Lane, the spelling rules which are specific to each year group as stated in the National Curriculum are taught on a weekly basis and spellings are sent home each week which are tested at the end of the week.

In EYFS and KS1, children are taught to read and write words including tricky words through daily phonics lessons. Spellings sent home are often related to focus sounds for the week related to phases being taught. On an incidental basis, when marking the children's day to day work, teachers will use the marking code and write 'sp' where the children have made a mistake and the children will correct or repeat the spelling in green in the margin.

## **EYFS**

In EYFS writing opportunities are planned for and set up each day through all areas of learning in the EYFS curriculum. In nursery and reception, there is an emphasis on developing the children's fine motor skills in order to help develop strength in their fingers and hands needed for pencil control and letter formation. This includes using playdough, tweezers, turning keys in padlocks etc to develop their finger strength. Activities are set up to encourage the children to make marks, write words and simple sentences to their individual ability. Teaching of writing occurs in a variety of situations including whole class activities, small groups, paired and individual which are both teacher-led and child-initiated.

In daily phonics lessons, writing is planned and taught as a natural part of the lesson. This is a combination of writing words with the taught phoneme or new tricky words that have been taught.

Each morning in reception when the children arrive at school they take part in a writing activity in order to develop their writing skills and apply their phonic knowledge. Picture resources are provided to support the children with writing simple words and phoneme mats are available for the

children to access. Opportunities for writing are set up indoors and outdoors with the children being able to use a variety of resources, including pencils, pens, crayons and chalks.

When the children have experienced applying their phonic knowledge to writing cvc, cvcc and ccvc words, they are encouraged to write in simple sentences. Adults model speaking the sentences and model writing them down. The children are encouraged in their independent play to practice writing across the areas of learning. They are encouraged to apply their phonic knowledge when they are writing new and unfamiliar words. Phonic displays in the classroom and the use of phoneme and tricky word mats support the children when they are writing independently.

Key texts linked to key topics or the big questions for the term are shared to enable the children to make links to their learning. Children's work is displayed as a celebration of their achievements.

### **Key Stage 1**

Writing within Key Stage 1 is taught within English lessons which take place for 5, one-hour sessions across the week. High quality key texts to use within English sessions are selected carefully and used to provide children with opportunities to engage in a variety of writing tasks alongside developing reading skills based on the Year groups objectives stated in the National Curriculum. The texts chosen are often linked to key topics or big questions for the term to enable children to make links to enhance their learning. A display on the key text is evident in classrooms and will also include examples of children's work to celebrate writing achievements.

As part of planning, teachers will explore the key text and map out an overview of writing and reading activities to be taught through the book which is approximately over six weeks. Opportunities to write for different purposes and genres are planned in such as writing diaries, stories, letters, monologues as well as poetry and factual pieces. Teachers plan a sequence of progressive lessons weekly which give children the opportunity to learn and practice writing skills as well as learn grammar, sentence level and word level work. Plans include clear WALT's and WILF's to ensure objectives are taught and met by children as well as stating the audience and purpose of tasks.

To support the writing process, children are given opportunities to engage in speaking and listening activities such as role play and hot seating as well as oral rehearsal of sentences which help to develop children's spoken language and sentence structure. Children have the opportunity to plan their ideas for writing through recording on planning frames and discussing ideas for writing with the teacher or peers. Key vocabulary and the word of the week is explored each week as well as being displayed in classes. Opportunities to enhance children's vocabulary occurs naturally as a text is explored in English, phonics and reading lessons. Children are taught meanings of new words, often using word aware techniques and encouraged to use exciting vocabulary in their spoken and written work.

It is vital that effective teacher modelling takes place at a whole class level regularly, in order to model expectations and equip children with the knowledge and skills needed to become confident independent writers. Within this regular shared writing session in Key Stage 1, the WALT's, WILF's, audience and purpose of activities are shared and a modelled example is created with input from the class. As well as modelling the features of the writing genre being taught, punctuation, spelling and grammar is also incorporated and demonstrated. At times, more discrete grammar focus lessons may take place if needed. Children are involved in a daily phonics session to aid the

development of spelling through Key stage 1 which feeds into English lessons too. Teachers will model the use of drawing upon phonics learning to spell unfamiliar words accurately and correct letter formation too.

A range of resources are provided to support and develop children's independent writing. These include scaffolds such as sentence starters, word mats, phonics mats, visual pictures, writing frames, dictionaries and thesauruses. Resources displayed in the learning environment such as word walls and phonics posters can help to aid writing too. As children write independently, teachers will support the writing process further through reading written work aloud with individual children, evaluating work together as a class and giving regular verbal feedback. Work is marked regularly in accordance with the marking policy and children are made aware of their achievements and targets to improve further. Children, particularly in Year 2 are taught how to edit and improve their work. The editing process is planned and taught to develop children's confidence and ability with this skill. Each half term, one longer piece of writing is published in separate publishing books. Teachers will monitor writing progress through regular assessment against targets of the National Curriculum.

As well as writing in English lessons, children have the opportunities to develop writing skills through activities across other areas of the National Curriculum. In Year 1, writing opportunities are also provided in the outdoor area which children can access. Writing tasks may also be given as weekly homework tasks to practice skills further.

## **Key Stage 2**

Writing within Key Stage 2 is taught within 5 x one-hour sessions across the week. On occasion, these sessions may be merged with our 5 x 30-minute reading sessions, which take place prior to this, as we believe that reading and writing are symbiotic and complement one another. Our key texts used to supplement the children's writing, are of high quality and more than one may be used to build the child's knowledge of what is being studied. For example, in Year 5 the key text being used is a fictional novel related to the Tudors in their writing but in reading they are using separate fictional Tudor text, which is from the point of view of a diverse character. Also built into this may be the use of non-fiction texts such as newspaper articles also from the same context.

Writing is planned in a linear fashion by year groups who monitor that they are covering the National Curriculum and in recent year filling any gaps which have not been covered due to the COVID 19 pandemic. Before the teaching of a piece of writing, the writing type will be introduced and the audience and purpose of the writing be discussed during planning amongst the teachers but almost importantly with the children so that they are crystal clear of this. The learning intentions (WALTs) that are planned are specific and related to the Year group's National Curriculum Objectives and the success criteria (WILFs) are made achievable so the child completes the WALT. However, the success criteria may vary across the class or Year group depending on the cohort of children and whether they have any additional needs. Due to this all levels of formality within writing are catered for and all of the grammar that builds into each Year groups curriculum objectives. This is then monitored by the English Subject Coordinators and in turn when English is being monitored by the Senior Leadership Team.

The curriculum sequence within Key Stage 2 will involve the introduction to a key text or context, followed by activities which will build the children's knowledge of this, leading to the research, the teaching of grammar, planning of what is being written, followed by an at first scaffolded but then independent first draft, editing using green pen, independent redraft, teacher in- depth mark, response to the teacher's marking and finally a redraft in either their writing or their publishing

book. Year groups are required to publish 1-2 pieces per half term which are initialled by the teacher only.

Children are predominantly scaffolded from Year groups 3-5 through the use of word banks, modelled examples and the encouragement to use dictionaries and thesauruses but slightly less in Year 6 because we encourage the children to use their own ideas and self-assess their own work. The pieces of work throughout the writing process are in-depth marked at the second draft stage, however teacher will address spelling errors and any fundamental errors. Towards the end of Year 5 and from the beginning of Year 6, teachers encourage children to be more independent when addressing their own work and the errors within due to the fact that moderation guidelines state that we must assess children on the pieces of work they can complete independently.

The introduction to the context is very important with Barley Lane Primary School as this the children to write with a better knowledge of the context and use their prior reading within their writing. Use of the key reading skills builds context for the children within these sessions and led to the use of specific vocabulary and grammar. To build the children's knowledge of context we will often use activities such as role play, role on the wall, hot seating related to specific themes within a text which then leads to the planning of a piece of writing.

Across the writing process, children are supported at a word, sentence and text level. We encourage the acquisition and spelling of new vocabulary that are planned for explicitly by teachers and unknown words are displayed as Word of the Week, or as weekly vocabulary. The knowledge of key vocabulary leads the children to being supported at sentence level through them being exposed to varied sentence types and use of both varied and complex punctuation which has led to better cohesion within their writing. They are therefore able to use new vocabulary within more complex types. This runs simultaneously alongside the teaching of the grammar rules and punctuation which are directly related to the specific texts in which they are studying and leading to a specific piece of writing. We believe that this will support the children in the composition of well-rounded and accurate pieces of writing related to the given context.

## **Impact**

The impact on our children is clear: progress, sustained learning and transferrable skills. With the implementation of the writing journey being well established and taught thoroughly in both key stages, children are becoming more confident writers and by the time they are in upper Key Stage 2, most genres of writing are familiar to them and the teaching can focus on creativity, writer's craft, sustained writing and manipulation of grammar and punctuation skills.

In EYFS, teachers assess writing against the Development Matters statements and Early Learning Goals at the end of reception. Across KS1 and KS2, teachers assess writing against objectives stated in the National Curriculum for their specific year group as well as TAF statements for years 2 and 6. Teams will internally moderate writing books to ensure consistency with judgements on children's attainment levels on a regular basis. Opportunities to moderate writing with other schools may take place in the year. Termly attainment for writing is recorded for each child and year group data is analysed by English leaders as well as senior leaders. Progress meetings each term with teachers outline strengths and areas requiring further support or improvement within writing. English leaders monitor planning, lessons and books to ensure objectives are being covered and progress is evident which in turn is monitored by senior leaders.

As all aspects of English are an integral part of the curriculum, cross curricular writing standards are also improved and skills taught in the English lesson are transferred into other subjects; this shows consolidation of skills and a deeper understanding of how and when to use specific grammar, punctuation and grammar objectives. We hope that as children move on from us to further their education and learning that their creativity, passion for English and high aspirations travel with them and continue to grow and develop as they do.

### **Other linked policies**

Curriculum Policy

Reading Policy

Early Years and Foundation Stage Policy