Kingsway Primary School
Kindness Perseverance Success

# Our Writing Approach

LOVE OF LANGUAGE

## Our Ambition

For all children at Kingsway Primary School, being able to communicate effectively in a range of forms is of paramount importance. One of the three key drivers underpinning the curriculum, the `Love of Language' is centred around developing exceptional communication skills in, and a passion for, reading, writing, speaking and listening. We truly believe that `confident writers emerge when children are equipped with the skills and inspiration needed to be competent writers.'

We aim to deliver an exceptional writing curriculum, where children love writing and make deliberate, informed choices as authors. They will also have a strong sense of who they are writing for (audience) and why (purpose) alongside the context. They will gain an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. We also intend for children to leave school being able to use fluent, legible and efficient handwriting.

Our primary mission is to fulfil the aim of the National curriculum for English and to create a community of writers:

* acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for…writing…

* appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage

* write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences

Alongside this, is ensuring that children competence in the dimensions of transcription and composition are developed rigorously. The mastery of these foundational skills is crucial.

It is essential that teaching develops children's competence in these two dimensions. In addition, children should be taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing have been incorporated into the programmes of study and medium term (unit) plans.

Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, in 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. Effective composition involves articulating and communicating ideas and then 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. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and eventually, speedy handwriting.

## Approach in EYFS

### Nursery

From nursery, we acknowledge and celebrate that behind every squiggle is a meaning or a story. Our approach to writing is rooted in the `Strong Foundations' and `Development Matters' documents and encompasses elements of children's physical development,

communication and language and literacy. The curriculum is ambitious as we recognise that children need to be able to speak and orally compose a sentence before they can write one.

Children develop the prerequisite skills for writing through a well-planned and well-considered environment that promotes gross and fine motor development, including vertical and horizontal mark-making and the gradual refinement of tools and grip so that children are able to form letters correctly and hold a pencil using the tripod grip.

Within the nursery, there is an equally strong focus on language acquisition and high-quality interactions between children and practitioners, in a language-rich environment; adults model the highest of spoken standards and provide structured opportunities for talk through stories, play and song.

*" Writing floats on a sea of talk." James Britton, 1970*

We recognise that writing and reading are inter-linked so learning in the Nursery is driven by a key text and is enriched by nursery rhymes and songs. We know that children, who are given repeated opportunities to engage with texts and both listen to and join in with rhymes and songs, have greater success when speaking, reading and writing. In addition to this, staff demonstrate a clear understanding of how to adapt provision to cohort needs, using children's interests to promote engagement and providing targeted support where required.

**Reception**

The curriculum in Reception is equally ambitious with high-quality talk and its explicit modelling at its core. In addition to this, there are varied opportunities for vocabulary acquisition and to orally compose ideas and sentences. Once key skills have been modelled, continuous provision (both indoors and out) enables the children repeated opportunities to practise, practise and practise some more. These approaches are carefully balanced.

Building on the strong foundations laid in the Nursery, from day two in school, children start the ELS accredited phonics programme and develop their transcription from the off. There is a deliberate focus on letter formation, accurate pencil grip and the spelling of decodable words and harder to read and spell words. Writing is taught explicitly through systematic phonics (ELS) and daily opportunities for dictation, ensuring pupils develop strong transcription skills alongside composition.

Alongside this, children will have daily 'book talk' lessons based on key texts, which have been judiciously selected, in which they learn new vocabulary and orally rehearse sentences using Colourful Semantics structures, to develop their composition. This approach also supports early sentence construction, enabling children to move from oral composition to written outcomes.

An integral part of learning are the daily, planned opportunities to both hear, enjoy, talk about and retell whole stories. As children become `ready' and proficient, they move towards developing the transcription of their own simple words, phrases and sentences.

From the Spring term onwards, the Drawing Club approach is used to encourage children to further develop their writing skills based on the key text they are studying. This approach is an adventure into stories and writing and through the use of drawing, the imagination is brought to life as transcriptional writing skills are taught and practised. Children's compositional skills, imagination and motivation to write are developed as they continue to craft phrases and simple sentences.

*"All writing is made up of sentences. Knowledge of grammar helps pupils to control sentences and convey meaning." (The Writing Framework, 2025)*

**Transition from Year Reception to Year 1**

Building fluency in foundational knowledge and skills is key so we ensure that there is a strong start made by all children into Key Stage One. Specific gaps in writing are shared between colleagues around the themes of; pencil grip; letter formation and G-P-C knowledge.

There is an ambitious focus on children being successful and having tailored teaching and practice to become fluent, with gaps addressed and the specific needs of cohorts considered. Oral rehearsal continues to be of key importance and a key emphasis on not making writing tasks too complex. There is a focus on quality over quantity, a focus on getting the basics right so that writing independence and confidence increases.

The use of colourful semantics structures proves an effective approach for some pupils, helping them to structure their ideas through clear scaffolds.

**Approach in Years 1 - 6**

For each year group, there is a Curriculum Map document. These are founded on the belief that skills are gradually built up over time and need to be reinforced and repeated through reiterative, quality first teaching, allowing writers to develop and grow. New skills are gradually introduced which build on prior learning.

Writing curriculum maps provide stimuli and key written outcomes to be achieved that create exciting opportunities for our children to respond to.

There is one for each term and they specify the key National Curriculum objectives to be reinforced or introduced across the key areas of spelling, handwriting, punctuation, grammar and composition. There is also a list of the text types to be covered alongside key terminology to be taught. The use of green is for `already seen' and so for many, is a pre-requisite expected to be seen in their writing and blue is `new' learning for that term/year group.

**Planning Units of Writing**

Each unit requires meticulous planning so that each lesson builds to a high quality, independent outcome for all children. In line with the National curriculum requirements, each unit will cover these 6 key writing processes:

* generating ideas
* planning

* drafting
* revising
* editing
* publishing/performing

Throughout all of these processes, teacher modelling is planned for and delivered with accuracy and precision.

There are no specified number of days within each sequence, for each of the phases as this is dependent upon the needs of each class and the complexities of the purpose/key outcome.

*Process 1 - Generating Ideas*
This process is about discovery and exploration; it is about making connections with the purpose/text type to be later written.

*Process 2 - Planning*
This process is to expose the structures and intended audience (grammatical and technical) of the text to enable children to replicate this structure in a key outcome.

*Process 3 – Drafting*
This process allows children to put their initial ideas into complete thoughts, into sentences and where age-appropriate, paragraphs and to organise their ideas in a way which allows the reader to understand the method.

This is where we see explicit teaching and practice of contextualised grammar that can be applied in the independent writing. This is grammar that has been identified during the `Generation of Ideas' process and that fully matches the purpose and audience identified. The drafting process is where children practise sentence composition explicitly and repeatedly.

*Process 4 – Revising*
This process allows children to *take a second, more general look at their ideas. It is one* **of** the most important parts of the writing process because it gives writers a chance to look closer at their writing and decide how to make it `better' by making changes.

*Process 5 – Editing*
This process is to teach children to look at how they have expressed their ideas. It is a skill that needs explicit modelling and one which children need deliberate practice in. We acknowledge that editing writing can be for a variety of purposes. Purely asking children to edit their writing will not make them better editors and writers; the focus must be carefully considered.

*Process 6 – Publishing/performing*
*This process is to give* children the opportunity to see the impact of their writing on the reader when it is reader-ready. This process is also motivational. We said that children would `publish' a maximum of 3 pieces a year.

## Transcription

Handwriting

From Years 1 to 6, the Nelson Handwriting Scheme is used. It provides a clear, practical framework for implementing and developing a whole school approach to handwriting. It offers full coverage of the technical aspects of writing (including letter formation, basic joins, printing, speedwriting and slant) and these are taught in purposeful and curriculum-relevant contexts, principally in the areas of phonics, spelling, punctuation and vocabulary. The scheme has clear progression built into it.

It emphasises the importance of posture, pencil grip, fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination, all of which are essential for effective handwriting. The scheme also includes the formation of numbers 0-9 and teaches children to leave spaces between words and form lowercase letters of the correct size relative to one another. It encourages the use of diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and teaches children to understand which letters belong to which `handwriting families'.

Spelling

In Year 2, we are using the ELS Spelling Scheme; it is a systematic, phonics-based approach to spelling that follows the ELS phonics progression. It is designed to support confident, accurate writing for Year 2 children, aligning with the Department for Education's Writing Framework. The program includes structured spelling lessons tailored to Year 2, ensuring that children receive direct instruction in spelling. The resources follow the format and structure of the ELS phonics teaching program.

In Years 3 – 6, the Essential Spelling and Word Knowledge Scheme is used. This is a way of thinking about words that enables children to understand the patterns in the English language using a combination of morphology, etymology and awareness of phonological rules.

The programme also uses morphology to teach children the meanings of affixes (suffices and prefixes) and how they combine with the root morpheme to make a word. By linking spelling and word construction to meaning, it equips children with the knowledge to work out the meanings of words as well as allowing repeated opportunities for children to practise and apply spelling patterns that they can use in any written outcome. There is also a deliberate focus on dictation.

## Assessment

At Kingsway Primary School, we see assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning. We assess writing using 2 broad overarching forms of assessment: day-to-day, in-school formative assessment and in-school summative assessment when teachers moderate writing together. Our main recording system for assessment is Insight with Edukey used specifically for SEND provision.

### In-school formative assessment

Formative assessment takes place daily, with teachers using questioning strategies to check children's understanding and the accurate application of skills. This is the opportunity for in-the-

moment feedback to move learning on or to support with the rehearsal or rephrasing of an idea or thought.

Throughout and at the end of each unit, formative assessment information gained along the way will help to inform the planning of the next unit so that misconceptions can be addressed and gaps closed and teaching redirected where necessary.

**In-school summative assessment**

Summative assessments of writing are recorded on Insight Tracker three times a year at the end of every long term. Teachers then analyse this data, looking specifically for trends and aspects of development that need to be addressed in the coming units. A meeting with the Writing Lead of the school then supports next steps with a focus on Quality First Teaching as well as detailed consideration of how best to support the progress of disadvantaged groups within each class. This will help to tailor future CPD for teachers and teaching partners.

Results are collated by SLT and reported to governors.

At the end of each term, we use year group assessment grids to assess progress in writing throughout the year. We use these to identify every child's strengths and next steps to monitor progress and ensure that children can remain 'on track' from their starting point. If children are working below the level of their current year, evidence grids from the appropriate year group are used.

**Other**

Writing walls in each classroom should be used to exemplify the skills being taught in the current unit. Each phase of the writing process should be visible.