



Writing

Intent

At St Bernadette, Literacy is at the heart of everything we do. By the end of Year 6, we intend for children to have developed a love of writing and to be able to express their thoughts and ideas clearly, creatively and confidently through the written word.

The teaching of writing enables children to communicate, express ideas and opinions and develop their imagination and creativity. It provides the skills to write in different tones for different purposes and audiences. Through teaching of grammar and spelling, children are prepared to write accurately and with authority across the curriculum and beyond school.

Our aims are to:

- Inspire children to write for a range of purposes and audiences using a wide range of quality texts.
- Plan a progressive, exciting, vocabulary-rich curriculum to build upon previous teaching, with regular assessment to ensure each child's needs are met to reach their full potential.
- Guide and nurture each individual on their own journeys to becoming successful writers and to develop a love of writing.
- Provide exciting stimuli, opportunities and experiences that engage and inspire all pupils to write.
- Allow all children to acquire a wide and rich vocabulary that empowers them to access the wider curriculum.
- Be able to spell new words by effectively applying the spelling patterns and rules they learn throughout their time in primary school, including the use of phonics.
- Create writers who can re-read, edit and improve their own writing, and enable pupils to be able to use the essential skills of grammar, punctuation and spelling confidently. ● Teach children to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.
- Encourage all children to take pride in the presentation of their writing, in part by developing a legible, cursive, individual handwriting style by the time they move to secondary school.

Implementation

How do we teach writing?

In order to help us to develop confident, enthusiastic writers who can express themselves in a variety of different styles and across a variety of contexts, writing at St Bernadette is taught 4x a week using a range of quality texts as a stimulus. Our writing curriculum is varied and challenging, allowing children to write for a range of purposes and audiences. In EYFS, writing is taught alongside daily phonics with 3 timetabled Literacy lessons a week. There are also a range of other activities during the day, linking to the class book for the week. These may include fine motor activities, story sequencing, letter formation, phonics related activities and independent writing. The children always have an opportunity to write during child-initiated learning (CIL) in both indoor and outdoor learning spaces.

Our writing curriculum has been planned using the Herts for Learning programme, ensuring progression and coverage of skills within fiction, non-fiction and poetry writing from the National Curriculum. We have adapted the programme to suit our learners and to ensure that quality texts are at the heart of every unit of work, both fiction and non-fiction. 'Take One Book' units are an extra opportunity to build exciting writing opportunities using a key text. Table 2 below shows how this has been developed and is under ongoing development to suit the needs of our children.

In line with school policy, writing lessons follow this structure:

The 'Revise' part of the lesson is used in writing lessons as an opportunity to introduce or practice handwriting and SPaG skills for each particular year group.

Revise- FFB	Four From Before- Children complete this at the beginning of a lesson. FFB is four questions based on knowledge each child should have; from their current topic, previous topics in the academic year and the School years prior.
Teach	The teacher introduces new learning making links on a foundation of prior knowledge and vocabulary to support and teach all pupils.
Investigate/ Research	Children used new learned skills along with existing ones to explore and justify what they have learnt.
Demonstrate/ Apply	Children rationalise their new knowledge and learning by applying it either in their investigative or research based work or written activity.
Extend	Children are given the opportunity to extend and transfer their learning in the form of a green challenge.

Foundational skills of Letter formation

We believe that consistently high expectations in presentation are extremely important in raising standards. Handwriting and spelling are taught explicitly from Reception to build automaticity, freeing cognitive load for higher-level text generation. Early identification

and scaffolding strategies for pupils struggling with fine motor skills, letter formation, or physical grip from the beginning of Reception. The Autumn Term will specifically focus daily on handwriting and letter formation throughout the school. Children in EYFS will be taught the correct formation of letters (without leads-ins) using our SSP 'Little Wandle' Handwriting Scheme, starting from the top of the letter. The handwriting lessons are designed to be short and focused, involve recall from the previous day, with direct, explicit teaching through strong modelling. This is followed by repeated practice, accompanied by precise feedback, to embed the learning in the long-term memory and ensure it becomes automatic.

In Reception, the first few weeks of teaching focus on patterns to provide the opportunity for children to practise correct grip of the pencil, pressure on the page and flow of handwriting. Lessons then move on to letter families. Letters are taught in families rather than following the order of the Little Wandle phonics progression because this enables the children to practise letters that have the same direction, thereby reducing the cognitive load.

This is consolidated and refined during Year 1 and at the start of Year 2 before being taught how to form 'lead-ins' and 'lead-outs' for each letter in preparation for joining. Once children can form their letters correctly, in Year 2 - Year 6, we use the Letter Join online handwriting programme to teach and practice the correct cursive joins with great emphasis on ensuring that capital and lowercase letters are the correct size, orientation in relation to each other before starting to join. Daily handwriting starters will form part of each Literacy lesson, with clear teaching, practice and refining opportunities. The Letter Join handwriting scheme follows this structure:

Year 2: Starting Cursive introduces children to cursive letters and how to join them. They will have regular practice in cursive letter formation and joining their handwriting.

Year 3: To improve legibility, consistency and quality of handwriting. It is designed to improve the quality of handwriting through resources which link handwriting to other topics.

Year 4 & 5: Learners will continue to build on producing legible handwriting through the regular practice

Year 6: Learners will consolidate the stamina and skills required to write at length, with accurate spelling and punctuation. They will develop more of a personal handwriting style as they write with automaticity and will learn to write at different speeds with different attention to neatness, depending on the task.

How do we teach Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG)?

Spelling is initially taught in line with the 'Little Wandle' SSP: see 'Phonics Implementation'. In EYFS, the children are taught to spell Phase 1-4 sounds, up to phase 5 for Year 1, which is then revisited and revised in the Autumn Term of Year 2. Words are segmented into their constituent phonemes for spelling and children apply their phonics knowledge and skills as their first approach even if a word is not phonically regular. From the Spring Term of Year 2 (following the completion of the SSP 'Little Wandle'), spelling is taught using the Herts for Learning 2022 Essentials Spelling Programme. This programme ensures that key expectations are taught for each year group explicitly once a week in line with the expectations set out in the National Curriculum for English - Spelling Appendix 1. Spelling patterns and rules are then practiced during the week in class and through homework tasks using online activities on Spelling Shed. This also covers the common exception words for each year group.

Grammar and punctuation are both taught explicitly (within the daily 10 minute starter activities outlined above) and embedded within the planned writing units. This ensures that children are given opportunities to practice and apply their SPAG knowledge within a range of contexts.

Impact

Throughout their time at St Bernadette, successful writing will be evident from the clear progression of length, editing, vocabulary and grammar and complexity of content. Whilst they accumulate skills and experience a range of high quality texts, they will become more able to develop their own ideas, engage a reader and audience, and use their understanding of the English language to critically evaluate their own work and others.

Our children will:

- Enjoy writing across a range of genres and have the knowledge needed to adapt their writing based on context and intended audience.
- Develop a wide bank of vocabulary to use within their writing and the spelling and grammar skills needed to enhance this.
- All be able to succeed in their writing and be proud of their writing achievements because work will be appropriately and carefully scaffolded.
- Be challenged to further improve and develop their writing, always aiming to make it the best it can be