



Our approach to writing

In order to achieve high levels of attainment and progress across the school, Powick has placed writing at the centre of our curriculum. The school has developed a Literacy Spine to ensure that English skills have clear progression and are taught in line with the National Curriculum 2014.

High expectations of the daily application of foundational skills, as well as learning to think as a writer, are embedded in every sequence of learning in order to ensure all groups make good progress.

Early writing

Writing in EYFS follows the Communication and Language strand and the Literacy strand of the EYFS Framework (2021).

Within the Foundation Stage, both the indoor and outdoor environments have resources to support the children's mark-making, drawing and writing. It is ensured that the children have opportunity to use mark-making, drawing and writing to explore and develop their own interests by providing an environment in which creativity, originality and expressions are valued.

The children are given time and space to concentrate on mark-making activities using a wide variety of resources that are challenging and interesting, and that can be used in a variety of ways as they express their thoughts, ideas and understanding. Practitioners involve themselves in the children's mark-making by modelling the process and ordering children's thoughts.

Children are given a varied diet of activities which support them to listen and respond appropriately including developing the ability to express themselves and explain with clarity. They are encouraged to listen to and participate in storytelling; talk about stories; and begin to develop their own narratives by connecting ideas or events.

In EYFS and Year 1, phonics is taught using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised Scheme, a complete systematic synthetic phonics programme developed for schools. Children will begin to spell some words correctly using phonetically plausible sentences and write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others.

Fine and gross motor skills that support children with the foundations of writing are developed from the moment children start Reception. More formal handwriting sessions start in the latter part of the first half term in autumn, and the activities to develop fine and gross motor skills continue alongside these sessions.



Building vocabulary

Children across the school are exposed to high-quality vocabulary daily through their reading and Word Aware – a model that provides a consistent approach to building vocabulary.

Teachers choose vocabulary with care to focus on Tier 2 words which link to the curriculum or children’s experiences and which can be applied in their reading and writing.

Speech and Language elements are developed as part of engaging with the Worcester Speech and Language Team’s additional services, and staff and pupils are supported by an on-site Speech and Language Therapist for a half day each week.

Developing foundational skills

Foundational skills have a high profile in every lesson across English, Maths and the wider curriculum. These skills include handwriting, composing simple sentences, spelling and use of punctuation appropriate to the year group. Adults model these essential skills accurately at all times and have high expectations of their application in all written work.

Progression in handwriting is detailed in our Handwriting Policy and progression in sentence construction, grammar and punctuation is detailed in our Literacy Spine for each year group.

Prompts are displayed using a consistent format selected from Widget symbols in each classroom. These may be used in classroom displays, lesson delivery or as target cards and prompts for individual pupils.

Sequences of learning

Writerly skills are taught during the daily English lesson, and sequences of learning are linked to key purposes: to entertain and inform in all year groups; to persuade from Year 3 onwards; and to discuss from Year 5 onwards. Pupils will be clear on the audience and purpose of a text and will apply a ‘writing as an author’ approach to develop the purpose of their texts.

Learning objectives are used to identify the skills being taught in each lesson and to make learning explicit to the children. Success criteria, shared with or built by the children, support a learning process or a learning product.

High quality models form the basis of sequences of learning and these will be analysed with the pupils in order to do the following:



1. Break writerly skills down into small steps which can be used as success criteria to achieve.
2. Be used to highlight and pinpoint key elements which are of a high quality and can be applied in context.

Sequences of learning allow for regular opportunities to review learning and to re-apply skills in different contexts. Pupils engage in both focussed and incidental writing in order to have a large number of opportunities to write and learn from the writing process.

Sequences of learning teach the specific skills of both proofreading and editing. Children write on every other line when they are drafting their texts as this facilitates the editing process. Increasing independence with editing is encouraged as children move through the school, as they consider their work and that of their peers with a critical eye.

Punctuation and grammar

Punctuation and grammar are taught within the daily English lesson as part of the sequence of learning. Expectations are based on the National Curriculum 2014 and made explicit in the school's Literacy Spine; the Spine includes the specific vocabulary that must be used when discussing elements of punctuation and grammar.

Daily opportunities to apply punctuation and grammar are planned for and included in every writing sequence.

Spelling

Spelling is taught both discretely and as part of English lessons.

The Little Wandle programme is followed in KS1 and sessions take place daily.

No Nonsense Spelling forms the basis of spelling sessions from Year 3 onwards and these sessions take place 2-3 days per week. During these lessons, spelling teaching is linked to 'Complete the Code' charts from Little Wandle where appropriate so that consistency is achieved across the school. Children are also directed to use the charts when writing independently so that they continually apply their phonic knowledge when spelling in all year groups.

Handwriting

Handwriting is applied to a high standard across all books by pupils and staff and accurately modelled at all times. Expectations of neat presentation are consistent across all of the



pupils' written work, and our Handwriting Policy details our overall approach to teaching and also the specific teaching points for each stage.

In EYFS, pupils are taught correct letter formation in print form, and this is consolidated in Year 1 to ensure that all pupils form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place. This is in line with the National Curriculum and creates a secure foundation for continuous cursive handwriting taught further up the school.

From Year 2 onwards, continuous cursive is regularly and explicitly taught so that children become automatic and fluent writers.

Formative assessment

Formative assessment is used regularly and rigorously before, during and after sequences of learning and fed back into short and long term planning.

Daily assessment is completed through the application of the feedback and marking policy and through live marking. Pupil conferencing is completed to ensure that gaps and misconceptions are addressed by the class teacher with individuals and groups in a timely manner.

Targets are set for individuals and groups as appropriate following previous feedback marking (including whole class marking). Pupils who have been given a target - which can include strategies such as bookmarks, red dots and post its - must be able to articulate what their target is and show how they have moved towards it.

Working walls and display

English Working Walls are backed in 'chalkboard paper' and kept up to date to inform the pupils' writing.

Displays include the following:

1. A sequence of writerly choices to support the current piece of writing being completed by the children;
2. Regular spelling misconceptions and key words including the statutory words for Y3-Y6;
3. Word Aware display that is updated daily and shows the Word Wizard work;
4. Punctuation and grammar as appropriate to support the children's needs;
5. Widget symbols to show the purpose currently being taught.

A whole-school display linked to a specific theme shows the progression of a child operating at age-related expectations for writing as they move through the school. This models and celebrates progress in writerly skills within a year group and across the school.