

John Blandy Primary School



Writing Policy September 2025

Belong. Believe. Brilliant

Intent

At John Blandy Primary School, we recognise that writing is integral to all aspects of life and we mindfully endeavor to ensure that 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.

Our writing stimulus is created through high quality, engaging books which inspire and enthuse children as writers, encouraging expression and higher order thinking skills to develop. Through these books and inspiring lessons, our children are given the best opportunities to build their capacity and confidence in a range of writing styles.

By creating a stimulating environment and employing appropriate resources, we are determined to provide all pupils with a supportive writing curriculum which will allow learners to recognise their full potential and develop their:

- Literacy
- Creativity
- Independence
- Inquisitiveness
- Inquiry skills
- Confidence

The aims:

- To develop children who are imaginative, creative, independent, inquisitive, inquiring and confident writers.
- To provide children with a range of writing skills and strategies to enable them to write confidently with comprehension, cohesion and enjoyment for a range of purposes, in a variety of contexts and for different audiences.
- To ensure no opportunity is missed to foster an enjoyment of writing amongst pupils and a recognition of its value, by setting work that is challenging, inspirational and motivating, helping them to develop a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards writing, which will nurture a life-long love of writing.
- To provide opportunities to explore a variety of different genres and to be exposed regularly to high quality texts, providing a model for pupils to aspire to.
- To ensure children have a clear understanding of the writing process: plan, draft, revise and edit their own work, and learn how to self and peer assess against a given success criteria.
- To monitor writing progress effectively to evaluate, promote, and maintain high levels of attainment.
- To ensure that children with barriers to writing are identified early and support, through adaptive teaching, is given promptly to help all children achieve their potential.
- To work in partnership with parents /carers to develop each child's full writing potential

Implementation

Teaching and Learning – Transcription and Composition

At John Blandy, we are following the 2014 National Curriculum for the teaching and learning of writing skills. 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 Subject Leads to ensure that it is being used effectively to provide challenge, stimulation and excitement to improve the standards of writing from Early Years to year 6. We believe in two distinct, but related areas which are involved in teaching children to write: Transcription and Composition. Transcription covers the technical aspects of writing: handwriting, spelling, grammar and punctuation. Composition focuses on the cognitive process of generating and structuring ideas to communicate effectively with the reader. Both are essential for developing lifelong successful writers. It is imperative that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

Planning

- To ensure the teaching of writing is effectively planned, and responsive to learners' needs, teachers plan the teaching of both writing composition and spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPAG) in line with National Curriculum programme of study as appropriate for the age and ability of the children.
- The meeting of NC objectives for each year group is paramount and learning objectives are revisited and reinforced throughout the year.
- To ensure coverage of writing genres and opportunities to write for different purposes we plan writing outcomes across the school – see our Writing Rolling Curriculum document.
- Every class has writing, grammar, spelling and handwriting lessons each week.
- For all classes, individual lessons are planned to meet the needs of each class, in line with the NC objectives.
- Clear learning-focused objectives and related success criteria are provided for every writing lesson.
- Planning for writing is recorded on the medium-term plan.
- A significant and engaging 'hook' is a prerequisite for every unit. In the majority of the cases, this 'hook' will be the core text being studied at the time, but in its absence, it may be a short film, event, picture, etc.

Individual Planning

After the medium-term planning has been agreed, one teacher within the team is then responsible for producing the overall individual lessons using PPT. The other members of the team tweak and amend these slides for their own class to ensure they are meeting their needs. Subject Leads and SLT have access to these plans via SharePoint.

The Role of Drama

- Drama activities (e.g. hot seating/freeze frame/conscience alley) should be evident in each term's planning.
- All drama activities contribute to the achievement of learning objectives and their success criteria.
- The skills required to meet these objectives should be modelled to the children.

It is likely that Drama lessons/activities will involve the elicitation of vocabulary from the children; this vocabulary should be scribed and used during the subsequent teaching of writing.

Strategies for the teaching of writing

Our children are provided with a variety of opportunities to develop, extend, and deepen their writing skills in and across each phase of education.

In the Reception year, the learning of writing follows the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework. During RWI phonic sessions children learn to form letters, segment words into sounds and write simple dictated words and sentences through the strategy 'hold a sentence'. Children also take part in Drawing Club sessions, where they write 'secret codes' which are words, phrases or sentences in line with their phonics ability. Children are given opportunities to extend their understanding of language through Drawing Club vocabulary, which introduces new words linked to shared stories. Oracy is also developed through the enhanced play provision and quality interactions with practitioners. Children are encouraged to mark make as part of their play, creating an enabling environment for writing both inside and outside.

The National Curriculum describes what must be taught in Key Stages 1 and 2. The school has a set of key objectives in writing that provide detailed guidance for the implementation of the National Curriculum for writing.

Key Stages 1 and 2

- Lessons engage children in the development of grammatical understanding, punctuation, phonics and spelling strategies based on high-quality texts.
- Meaningful contexts and high-quality class-based texts are provided as the hook or as the inspiration for writing.
- Quality speaking, listening and drama activities precede writing to enable the development of quality writing skills and outcomes.
- Teachers exploit cross-curricular links wherever possible and further develop writing skills within a variety of contexts and genres.
- A clear model for how to meet lesson objectives is presented to the class at the outset.
- Teacher modelling of the thought processes and standards required are clear and regular.
- Writing is linked to learning-focused objectives, with related success criteria (Steps to Success).

How is writing modelled and how are children supported with their writing at John Blandy?

At John Blandy we believe that modelling writing is one of the most effective tools in a teacher's toolkit. Through modelling, pupils are shown the process of working through a problem or task and are provided with 'background thinking' through narrating aloud the thoughts, decision and evaluations involved.

We model/support writing using the following strategies at different points during the writing process:

Modelled write- All eyes are on the adult modelling who talks through their ideas and choices within the sentences they are writing. The adults will verbalise why they are selecting chosen vocabulary and sentence structures and will model editing and improving as needed when needed. Children are learning the craft of writing here.

Guided/Instructed writing- A small group sharing ideas verbally and all writing these ideas down as instructed by the adult. This would be used earlier in the writing journey (not the final writing outcome) to help with specific sentence structure/ organisation or knowledge.

Shared writing- The adults and children work together to generate a piece of writing, sharing ideas. This is often used when editing/improving a piece of writing, uplevelling work, or when writing a genre that children are very familiar with and do not require as much modelling of key features and thought processes.

Supportive writing- Small groups of children share their ideas and sentence structure with an adult, and the adult supports them by asking open-ended questions to support their next steps and to help maintain focus in longer sustained pieces. Examples of the open-ended question could be: What do you think might happen next? What could follow that sentence? Re-read the sentence you have written; do you need to change or add anything?

Peer sharing- When the children are writing, asking peers to read aloud parts of their writing allows us as a class to discuss what they like about it and to offer improvements needed. This also gives ideas to others.

Adaptive Teaching and Inclusion

Adaptive teaching strategies will be used to appropriate scaffolds and challenges to enable all learners to achieve learning outcomes. These could include strategies such as word banks, planning templates, adult scribing ideas and visual stimulus. At John Blandy we use partner talk in mixed ability pairings during our lessons to support learning for all. Technology will also be used to support learners who find transcription challenging. Thus, allowing them to be able to share their ideas and thoughts in writing.

Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling

We, at John Blandy, deliver the National Curriculum for Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation to all pupils, as appropriate to their learning needs as stated in Appendix 2.

As well as teaching relevant grammar within a specific writing unit, our teachers plan a discrete weekly grammar lesson (taken from the whole school progression document) which is new to the children or requires an additional lesson based on marking and feedback of previous written work. This enables the children to practise the newly learnt concept discreetly and to develop a secure understanding of its use prior to using it within a genre.

Overlearning is key to enabling the children to transfer their recently gained knowledge into their long-term memory. Therefore, at John Blandy at the beginning of every English lesson we provided a 'grammar hammer' slide which displays a couple of grammar questions based on concepts learnt in previous years or earlier on in this academic year for the children to answer. This strategy helps the children to keep all the different elements of grammar in the forefront of their minds.

Spelling

We use the SIAMS spelling approach at John Blandy. The main aim is to transfer the learning of spellings from short term memory to long term memory which helps the children not only learn the words for the weekly test but transfers this into their daily writing. Children will start with a key number of words in week 1 and each week will receive an additional 3, 4 or 5 until they are at 12, 16 or 20 words per week. This ensures the children can embed the spellings, transferring them to long term memory. During week 5, the children remain with either 12, 16 or 20 spellings with the first group words falling off as they received the next ones.

In the autumn term of each year the spelling focus is on common exception words. As we move into the spring and summer terms the spelling focus changes to the year group appropriate spelling rules.

Supporting children with SEND and spelling

Learning to spell is a right for all children but we recognise that some children may find this trickier than others and may need additional support in this area to remove barriers to learning them. We recognise that all children learn in different ways which is why we will offer an adaptive support model for any child that needs it. This will be discussed with parents and the school SENDCo and reviewed regularly to ensure that they are making progress.

Adapted provision may include:

1. A reduced number of spellings, built up in smaller chunks with repeated practice before moving on. E.g. starting with 3 spellings and adding one more when the child has been successful to a maximum of 10 spellings.

2. Precision teach model
3. Word building approach using a variety of materials such as magnetic letters, post it note building games and different coloured pens.
4. Mnemonics - 'because' – big elephants can always understand small elephants.
5. Finding smaller words inside the word E.g accurate "I spy rat "
6. Look, cover, write, check and highlight in a different colour the tricky part.
7. A model where they follow a different sequence:

Hear the word, clap the syllables, study the word, underline the tricky part, write the word in multiple multi-sensory ways, speed write the word, notice spelling similarities EG "If you can spell pack, you can also spell 'back' 'sack' 'track'

8. Activities to improve tracking speed such as word searches.

Handwriting

We aim for all children at John Blandy to achieve a consistent neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in a cursive font, eventually producing a fluent joined handwriting style.

It is vital that children can write quickly, comfortably and legibly, as it is a skill needed in all curriculum areas. Children's self-esteem is also heightened when they are able to take pride in their handwriting.

At John Blandy we use Twinkl Cursive Script. Twinkl Handwriting offers a schoolwide consistent approach with a planned sequence of lessons to help teachers ensure they have progressively covered the skills required to meet the aims of the National Curriculum for writing transcription and the related Early Learning Goals.

The Twinkl Handwriting scheme intends to take all pupils on a journey to using fluent, speedy and joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. This, in turn, will help to support their composition and spelling. (See separate handwriting policy)

Our school environment

- Content on working walls is current and reflects the learning journey undertaken throughout the unit.
- The classroom is a vocabulary-rich environment.
- The way in which mixed ability pupil pairings are used to enable all pupils to make progress, forms a significant part of this.
- The whole school environment (in particular, the teaching and non-teaching spaces) should inspire pupils to write.
- Displays throughout the school emphasize our commitment to improving writing.
- Pupils enter writing competitions.
- Quality pieces of writing are celebrated within the year group, in assemblies and online.

Impact

Writing in our school is progressive, challenging, and planned to meet the needs of our children. We are ambitious and we strive for the best possible outcomes in writing for our children. Pupil feedback tells us that our children are enthusiastic, independent, and reflective writers across a wide range of genres. Assessments are carried out regularly enabling us to measure and monitor the impact of our writing curriculum provision in a timely manner. Regular rigorous Pupil Progress meetings have also resulted in children who are on track to being further challenged; and for those where this is not the case interventions have been put in place more promptly to ensure opportunities for progress.

Assessment

Assessment is regarded as an integral part of teaching and learning and is a continuous process. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to assess all pupils in their class. We strive to make our assessment purposeful, allowing us to match the correct level of work to the needs of the pupils, thus benefiting the pupils and ensuring progress.

Assessment for Learning

We are continually assessing our pupils and recording their progress. Information for assessment is gathered in various ways: by talking to the children, observing their work and giving the children live marking and feedback. Teachers use this assessment information to adapt current provision and plan further work.

Formative Assessment

At the end of every unit the children draft and edit their writing. They then complete their 'hot write' where they write their final edited piece of work in the writing moderation books. Teachers use the Cambrian Learning Trust Writing descriptors to assess each piece of work against and give the children their next steps/targets for the following piece of writing. In KS2 the children record their writing targets in the back of the English Skills books to help them refer back to through out the next unit of writing. The children complete, on average, two 'hot-writes' every half term.

Summative Assessment of Learning

The attainment and progress of children is assessed and recorded three times during the school year. This data is used to set targets and identify priorities for intervention. Teachers provide parents with feedback on their child's progress and achievement at parent's evenings and through the end of year report.

The role of the Subject Leads.

The Subject Leads will monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning of writing in Early Years to Year 6. 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.

Monitoring

Writing throughout the school and how it reflects this policy, will also be reviewed throughout the year in the following ways:

- Subject lead and SLT planning, recorded learning, assessment scrutiny;
- Pupil voice
- Learning walks;
- EYFS/KS2 external moderation;
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- Trust Peer Reviews