



Writing at St Mary's

At St Mary's, we believe that all children should be able to confidently communicate their knowledge, ideas and emotions through their writing. Through careful planning we ensure that children acquire a wide vocabulary, a solid understanding of grammar and be able to spell new words by effectively applying the spelling patterns and rules they learn throughout their time in primary school.

Through Talk 4 Writing, we have carefully chosen texts to support children to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.

We believe that all pupils should be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their writing, in part by developing a good, joined, handwriting style by the time they move to secondary school.

We believe that all good writers refine and edit their writing over time, so we want children to develop independence in being able to identify their own areas for improvement in their pieces of writing, editing their work effectively during and after the writing process.

We do not put ceilings on what pupils can achieve in writing and we encourage flair and excitement for the reader.

How We Teach Writing

All children have daily English lessons.

We predominantly teach writing through the Talk 4 Writing model, outlined by Pie Corbett. Talk 4 Writing enables children to read and write independently for a variety of audiences within different subjects. Children move from dependence towards independence through three stages which teach the children to write creatively and powerfully. This is underpinned by the National Curriculum objectives for each year group.

Fiction

Each unit begins with a hook from which the children complete a cold piece of writing. The children are reminded of objectives they have covered in previous units or year groups.

Imitation

After the cold task, which acts as an initial assessment for planning the unit, the children become immersed in a model text carefully chosen and adapted if necessary, by the class teacher. This will be in the form of story mapping with actions, role play, drama, and short burst writing. Children learn new vocabulary, grammar and spelling patterns through the model text and deepen their understanding of writer techniques. Crucial to the Talk 4 Writing process, children analyse and 'box up' the basic story plot of the text in preparation for creating their own stories. Children and teacher build 'toolkits' for writing, which provide the children with ideas for characterisation and setting description.

Innovation



Once the children are familiar with the model text, the text is then changed. In early years and key stage one, this is through making simple changes to the original story map; in key stage two this involves using the basic story plot. Teachers then guide the children through shared and guided writing over a number of days which concentrates on bringing all elements of writing together so that children can be supported with writing effectively and accurately. Children will learn about grammar, punctuation and sentence structures in this stage.

Independent Application

Finally the children get their opportunity to write independently. They use new boxed up plans to plan their story and write a draft of their new story. Some children choose to closely follow the model text; other children have a go at being more creative. They complete a first draft of their work which is then edited and improved by themselves. Teachers then teach any areas for development before the children write their independent, final write.

Non-Fiction

Non-fiction units are shorter in length, but taught in a similar way to fiction. Year groups are exposed to a range of non-fiction texts, including:

- Discussion texts
- Instructions
- Explanation texts
- Persuasive texts
- Recounts

Children will identify the features of each text type and apply these to their own writing.

Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling

In Key Stage Two, children are taught explicit grammar, punctuation through short basic skills sessions. The objectives are outlined in the National Curriculum and are progressive through the year groups. Spelling is taught through the Superhero Spelling programme; this is an engaging, systematic spelling scheme that follows on from Monster Phonics. It covers all of the Key Stage Two spelling requirements and statutory words. Grammar, punctuation and spelling objectives are applied throughout each Talk 4 Writing unit. In Key Stage One, children are taught spelling through their daily phonics sessions.

Handwriting

Handwriting is taught systematically and frequently through the Penpals handwriting scheme.

Five stages are identified and these form the basic organisation of the scheme:

1. Readiness for writing: gross and fine motor skills leading to letter formation (Reception)
2. Beginning to join (KS1)
3. Securing joins (Lower KS2)



4. Practising speed and fluency (Lower KS2)

5. Presentation skills (Upper KS2)

Impact

We strive to ensure that our children's writing attainment is in line or exceeding their age-related expectations, when we consider the starting points of children. We have high expectations for all children to succeed.

Pupil outcomes at the end of Foundation Stage, at the end of Key Stage 1 and within Key Stage 2 SATS are consistently above the national average.

Children enjoy writing across a range of genres and have a good understanding of how to adapt their writing based on the context and audience. They will have a bank of at least six story plots that they can use in their writing in secondary school.

By the end of Key Stage Two, children will be able to effectively apply spelling rules and patterns they have been taught. They will have acquired a wide vocabulary that they can use in their writing.

Teachers regularly track pupils' progress in writing which informs planning and any intervention needed.