

## **Writing at St Lawrence's Primary**



### **INTENT:**

At St Lawrence's, we value Writing as a key life skill and are fully committed to enabling our children to become competent and confident writers.

We teach a 'text based' English Curriculum from Reception to Year 6. We are a 'Power of Reading' school, using high-quality texts. Our Writing Curriculum is inextricably linked with our Reading Curriculum and class texts (See Whole School Reading Spine) but also includes many opportunities for children to write about real-life experiences. Considering that our school serves an area of extreme deprivation, experiences are limited and therefore we allocate a large proportion of our funding to facilitate these and improve Vocabulary and Writing.

### **IMPLEMENTATION:**

Following a build-up of skills taught throughout our daily English lessons, children complete a piece of extended writing, usually on a two-weekly cycle. We cover a variety of different genres across school – narrative, recount, explanation, discussion, instructions, biography, character and setting descriptions, poetry etc

We analyse 'good examples' of a similar piece of writing to discuss/model with children, before working together on planning frames to support children with the structure of their writing.

We use 'Success Criteria' so children know exactly what they have to achieve in each piece. This 'Success Criteria' is differentiated to ensure challenge for more able children and support for others. We plan smaller working groups for children who need extra support and to extend children working at 'greater depth.'

#### **Writing in KS1**

Each piece of extended writing is built up from shorter pieces, for example, a character profile, vocabulary activity, an adjective lesson or a story plan.

The extended piece is preceded by a session where children are reminded of the skills and objectives covered in the two-week period and these skills form the basis of success criteria - informing children of what they need to include in the piece. Success criteria always includes the following: weekly grammar focus, genre reference, current phonic expectations and handwriting expectations.

We include regular pit stops/mini plenaries to share good examples and focus in on a particular aspect.

By the end of KS1 children are able, with support, to revisit their writing alongside the success criteria and then make additions or corrections to their work. Children are supported to recognise their next steps to improve their Writing. Future planning and teaching will reflect these.

We aim to gradually increase independence of children in their approach to Writing. All children should be writing with some degree of independence with appropriate input, support, modelling and guidance from teachers. This sometimes means that a small group of children will work supported by an intervention teacher.

#### **Writing in KS2**

In KS2, we follow a well-established and successful system of drafting and editing before completing a final piece of Writing. This is usually over a two-week period.

We share and collect examples of appropriate vocabulary which children record in their WOW word book to use when writing independently.

As in KS1, we include regular pit stops/mini plenaries to share good examples and focus in on a particular aspect (such as Punctuation). Children begin to acquire the skills to self or peer assess work against the success criteria.

We aim to increase independence of children to improve their confidence. All children should be writing independently in KS2, but with appropriate input, support, modelling and guidance from teachers.

We create a calm and quiet environment, encouraging periods of silent writing increasing in length.

### **Writing in Early Years**

In order to write effectively in later years, children need to develop physical as well as literary skills.

In Nursery, we focus on developing these physical skills by encouraging 'big arm' movements to strengthen muscles, alongside fine motor skills to develop coordination and control. 'WriteDance' and 'Dough Disco' are among the programmes used to support this. By the Summer term many children are attempting to write their own name.

These are further refined as the children move into Reception, where writing is linked to the phonics programme. Children learn the correct formation of each letter as it is introduced and this is reinforced throughout the year along with a correct pencil grip and writing posture.

As their phonic skills develop, children are encouraged to use this knowledge in their writing. Labelling pictures using initial sounds, leads onto labelling using initial, then final, then medial sounds.

Shared and Guided writing linked to key texts and to first hand experiences, gradually helps the children begin to have the confidence to write simple sentences – independently - using their knowledge of Tricky words and Phonics to help them. As children are focussing on using a phonetically plausible spelling rather than the 'correct' spelling, this enables the children to become more confident in their writing.

In order to achieve the Early Learning Goals for Writing at the end of Reception – we work towards children being able to write a series of simple sentences, spelling some high frequency words correctly and using phonetically plausible spellings for unfamiliar words.

### **Spelling and Phonics**

'Letters and Sounds' forms the basis for all Phonics teaching throughout our school. Children are taught daily phonics from the beginning of Reception until the end of Year 2. When children progress into KS2, we identify and track children who still require phonics input. These children receive additional phonics teaching at least 3 times a week and continue to read books that match and reinforce the sounds they know. This is monitored by our Literacy Lead and SENCO.

In KS2 we follow the requirements laid out in the 2014 National Curriculum for English [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/335186/PRIMARY\\_national\\_curriculum\\_-\\_English\\_220714.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335186/PRIMARY_national_curriculum_-_English_220714.pdf) From Y2 to Y6, we use 'No Nonsense Spelling programme' as a resource to support this. Children work on differentiated spelling lists

each week. We have a weekly spelling lesson focussing on spelling patterns and a weekly spelling test.

The National Curriculum outlines word-lists for each year group. These are statutory. The lists are a mixture of words pupils frequently use in their writing and those which they often misspell. In the Spring Term, we work hard to learn these words. We host 'St Lawrence's Big Spell' each year which is a Spelling Bee competition, using the statutory word lists. The children greet this competition with enthusiasm and progress is rapid.

### **Punctuation and Grammar**

We have a whole school curriculum for Punctuation and Grammar. In KS2, we teach a weekly discrete Punctuation and Grammar lesson but also integrate a grammar focus into our daily English lessons and extended writing.

### **Vocabulary**

Our school serves an area of extreme deprivation. There are 30 different languages spoken within our school and the proportion of pupils who speak English as their first language is below average. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for support from the pupil premium and those who have special educational needs, is also well above the national average.

As a result of this, we have identified the development of Vocabulary as a key focus in our teaching.

All classrooms have a Vocabulary display which includes 'Word of the Day' and relevant vocabulary for the current topics. Children have 'Wow Word books' to record new vocabulary. Children are provided with word banks to assist them in their Writing. Teachers grab any opportunity to identify and discuss new words throughout the day. We encourage the independent use of dictionaries and thesauri.

### **WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

We provide additional opportunities across the curriculum for children to write. These do not replace our weekly Extended Writing. Skills such as 'explanation writing', 'newspaper report' or 'letter writing' which are taught in English, can then be used for added experience in Science / RE/ Humanities across the year. Our medium-term English planning identifies the planned opportunities, of which there are at least one or two in RE, Humanities and Science each half term.

This piece of writing is completed in the appropriate subject book and not the extended writing book.

### **Handwriting**

We follow *Nelson Handwriting Scheme* which is a consistent whole-school handwriting scheme from Reception to Year 6. This scheme introduces cursive handwriting in step-by-step stage. We teach discrete Handwriting lessons up to Year 5. We also follow an intervention programme for those children who need extra practise to improve their formation and style. Children write in pencil up to Year 4 where we introduce 'Manuscript Handwriting Pens' which have a smooth writing tip with easy flow and a comfortable grip.

### **ASSESSING WRITING**

Every half term, children complete an independent piece of Writing. No Success Criteria is provided but initial input, guidance, discussion and sharing of ideas. We show children the 'marking criteria' and discuss what is expected of them. This writing is then assessed against end of year expectations for that particular year group.

## **IMPACT**

### **EYFS DATA:**

|                       | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
|-----------------------|------|------|------|
| OVERALL GLD           | 69%  | 65%  | 60%  |
| <b><u>WRITING</u></b> | 69%  | 71%  | 67%  |

### **KEY STAGE ONE DATA:**

#### **EXPECTED STANDARD:**

|         | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
|---------|------|------|------|
| WRITING | 71%  | 69%  | 71%  |

#### **GREATER DEPTH STANDARD:**

|         | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
|---------|------|------|------|
| WRITING | 11%  | 15%  | 10%  |

### **KEY STAGE TWO DATA:**

#### **EXPECTED STANDARD:**

|         | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
|---------|------|------|------|
| WRITING | 78%  | 78%  | 80%  |

#### **GREATER DEPTH STANDARD:**

|         | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
|---------|------|------|------|
| WRITING | 11%  | 25%  | 20%  |

We are very proud of how Writing is taught in our school and this data shows that our approach is highly successful.