



The Federation of Spixworth Schools

Writing Policy

Agreed by Individual Governor: Summer 2024

To be reviewed: Summer 2026

Intent

Overall curriculum rationale

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies used for the development of the curriculum undertaken within The Federation of Spixworth Schools. This policy promotes best practice and establishes consistency in teaching and learning across the federation. It also takes into account the diversity of our learners, providing equality of opportunity for all, alongside varied learning experiences that lead to a consistently high level of pupil attitude and achievement in Writing.

At The Federation of Spixworth Schools we will inspire every child through words. Through engagement in language rich classrooms we will open worlds of opportunity. High quality texts will develop enthusiastic writers where experimentation with words is supported alongside development of skills in the technicalities of writing. Our children will communicate in all its forms with a pleasure and passion that will open doors, across subjects, to the possibility of realising endless dreams and lifelong learning.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2024) The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- DfE (2013) National Curriculum in England: *Writing* programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Curriculum
- Curriculum Risk Assessment
- Spoken Language
- Phonics and Early Reading
- Reading
- Handwriting
- Spelling
- Marking, Feedback and Assessment

Aims

At The Federation of Spixworth Schools, we believe that writing is an essential life skill that children can and must be successful in. With a clear, consistent, whole Federation approach to writing, children will apply their experiences of speaking, listening and reading to become competent, confident communicators through the written word.

At The Federation of Spixworth Schools we:

- Have a coherently planned and sequenced writing curriculum that is designed and developed from the National Curriculum
- Enable pupils to articulate with appropriate vocabulary, write with grammatical accuracy and be able to apply spelling patterns correctly using a neat handwriting style

- Provide a rich and stimulating writing environment
- Provide inclusivity for all pupils
- Secure pupil's awareness of the stages of the writing process and the impact of the final piece on the intended audience
- Inspire pupils to be interested in words, their meanings; developing a growing vocabulary in spoken and written forms
- Equip pupils with writing skills that allow them to store information for later retrieval, interact with others, to reflect and to express ideas creatively
- Equip pupils with the ability to understand the characteristics of writing's many forms and adapt their style to suit a wide range of purposes
- Enable pupils to write with confidence, fluency and understanding, in handwritten script and through ICT, orchestrating a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct
- Enable pupils to express themselves coherently in a variety of text types and genres across the whole curriculum.

Implementation

National Curriculum Content

The programmes of study for writing at key stages 1 and 2 are constructed by transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

It is essential that teaching develops pupils' competence in these two dimensions. In addition, pupils should be taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. These aspects of writing have been incorporated into the programmes of study for composition. Writing down ideas fluently depends on effective transcription: that is, on spelling quickly and accurately through knowing the relationship between sounds and letters (phonics) and understanding the morphology (word structure) and orthography (spelling structure) of words. Effective composition involves forming, articulating and communicating ideas, and then organising them coherently for a reader. This requires clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting.

EYFS Educational Programme

Taken from the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage January 2024. Teaching and learning in reading is planned in line with the Communication and Language and Literacy areas. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Phonics and Early Reading policy.

Communication and Language

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with

new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, storytelling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Literacy

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).

EYFS Early Learning Goals Language and Communication

Listening, Attention and Understanding

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions.
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding.
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

Speaking

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary.
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate.
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Literacy

Comprehension

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary.

- Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories.
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

Word Reading

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs.
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending.
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

Writing

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters.
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

Key Stage One

Pupils' writing during year 1 will generally develop at a slower pace than their reading. This is because they need to encode the sounds they hear in words (spelling skills), develop the physical skill needed for handwriting, and learn how to organise their ideas in writing.

In writing, pupils at the beginning of year 2 should be able to compose individual sentences orally and then write them down. They should be able to spell correctly many of the words covered in year 1. They should also be able to make phonically plausible attempts to spell words they have not yet learnt. Finally, they should be able to form individual letters correctly, so establishing good handwriting habits from the beginning.

Lower Key Stage Two (Years 3 and 4)

Pupils should be able to write down their ideas with a reasonable degree of accuracy and with good sentence punctuation. Teachers should therefore be consolidating pupils' writing skills, their vocabulary, their grasp of sentence structure and their knowledge of linguistic terminology. Teaching them to develop as writers involves teaching them to enhance the effectiveness of what they write as well as increasing their competence. Teachers should make sure that pupils build on what they have learnt, particularly in terms of the range of their writing and the more varied grammar, vocabulary and narrative structures from which they can draw to express their ideas. Pupils should be beginning to understand how writing can be different from speech. Joined handwriting should be the norm; pupils should be able to use it fast enough to keep pace with what they want to say. Pupils' spelling of common words should be correct, including common exception words and other words that they have learnt (see English Appendix 1). Pupils should spell words as accurately as possible using their phonic knowledge and other knowledge of spelling, such as morphology and etymology.

Upper Key Stage Two (Years 5 and 6)

Pupils should be able to write down their ideas quickly. Their grammar and punctuation should be broadly accurate. Pupils' spelling of most words taught so far should be accurate and they should be able to spell words that they have not yet been taught by using what they have learnt about how spelling works in English. During years 5 and 6, teachers should continue to emphasise pupils' enjoyment and understanding of language, especially vocabulary, to support their reading and writing. Pupils' knowledge of language, gained from stories, plays, poetry, non-fiction and textbooks, will support their increasing fluency as readers, their facility as writers, and their comprehension. As in years 3 and 4, pupils should be taught to enhance the effectiveness of their writing as well as their competence.

Curriculum delivery

Entitlement and Curriculum Provision

In Reception, children follow the EYFS Curriculum and teaching and learning is planned for in line with the Communication and Language and Literacy areas. In Key Stage One and Key Stage Two children follow the Writing programmes of study of the National Curriculum for English although skills in writing are embedded throughout all areas of the Primary National Curriculum. In writing, our long term plan is developed based on The Write Stuff Approach.

Progression

Progression of knowledge and skills in Writing begins from the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 through the Little Wandle Phonics approach. Here children are taught phoneme and grapheme recognition and the ability to segment sounds to spell words. They develop their fine motor skills for writing, forming letters, words then sentences that can be read by others. The Write Stuff approach is used from the Spring term of Reception to the end of Year 6. Our curriculum ensures that all children have plenty of opportunities to write for different purposes. We encourage writing through all curriculum areas and use quality reading texts to model examples of good writing. Children build on their early skills to become confident and accomplished writers.

The Write Stuff Approach

As a school we have adopted The Write Stuff by Jane Considine to bring clarity to the mechanics of writing. The Write Stuff follows a method called Sentence Stacking which refers to the fact that sentences are stacked together and organised to engage children with short, intensive moments of learning that they can then immediately apply to their own writing.

This approach makes sure that all of our children are exposed to high quality texts that stimulate quality responses to reading, high quality writing and purposeful speaking and listening opportunities.

Daily Writing Lessons

The Jane Considine Write Stuff approach is used to teach writing daily. Up to Year 2, 45 minutes is devoted to writing whilst from Year 3 an hour a day is allocated for writing at least four times a week.

The Independent Writing Sequence

The children get an opportunity to show what they have learnt in the second half of the unit. This comprises several stages such as: recapping sentence stack, drawing out success criteria, planning writing, independent writing, editing and improving.

Writing Books

All children have a writing book. Children work on a double page split into two sides. The left side is the thinking side and is split into three sections and the right side is the writing side. The thinking side is used during 'initiate' and the writing side is used during 'enable'. Younger children (EYFS) may have clipboards and three different coloured pieces of paper to scribe ideas and glue onto the thinking. Teachers may use 'chotting sheets' to support children that need it and these would be glued onto the left side of the page.

Grammar and Punctuation

Grammar and punctuation knowledge and skills are taught in context at the point of writing using the grammar rainbow as a system for success. The grammar rainbow captures the broad spectrum of coverage for the whole primary curriculum and provides a hook so that pupils can deliver sentences that apply one of the grammar strands. Grammar is very much used as a sentence building device and the grammaristics strengthen the quality of children's writing. Children will gain knowledge of the various grammatical structures and be able to deploy them in skilled and interesting ways so that they can manipulate language and take control of a wide range of effects and intents.

Teaching and learning approaches

Modes of Teaching

Narrative lessons are based around a two mode approach to teaching - Sentence Stacking and Experience lessons. For non-fiction, there are three modes of teaching - Jigsaw Shapes, Sentence Stacking and Experience lessons).

Experience Lessons

Our writing units are enriched with experience lessons. These immerse children in enriching memorable experiences, understanding and knowledge in preparation for writing which is rich in context, concise vocabulary and built from imagination. Experience sessions can be real (interviewing experts, research using the internet or books, watching documentaries, trips out or visitors into school) or imagined (drama activities such as freeze frame, hot seating or conscience alley). The drama activities allow the children to walk in the shoes of the character in order to develop ideas deeply and build knowledge over time.

Sentence Stacking

Children's writing is celebrated through a collaboratively formed, community piece of writing which builds over the duration of the unit to display the whole piece of text.

Jigsaw Shapes

Non-narrative texts are based on jigsaw shapes. These have been designed to provide a clear visual representation of the structure of a non-fiction text type.

Planning expectations

The Lesson Sequence

Whether teaching fiction, non-fiction, poetry or play scripts, the lessons follow a set sequence during which the first half is focused on teacher modelling and the second half gives children the opportunity to apply what they have learnt by following an independent writing sequence. Narrative units are often based around picture books, novels or film clips.

The Lesson Structure

In each lesson, there are three learning chunks which are each purposeful, precise and powerful teaching points. Each chunk is centred around initiate, model and enable.

Initiate - This is the part of the lesson where the teacher initiates pupil interest and engagement. The core purpose is to inspire and captivate pupil's attention using an engaging stimulus.

Model - Following the inspiration in the initiate stage, the teacher verbalises their live writing decisions as they model a high quality sentence with a deep focus on vocabulary choices. The sentence is crafted on a lens from the Writing Rainbow and shares aspects that need to be included and writing rules for success to guide the pupils towards independence.

Enable - An opportunity for pupils to construct their own sentence based on the teacher model and using a shared lens from a Writing Rainbow zone.

Equipment and resources

The Writing Rainbow

The approach is centred on the Writing Rainbows. Both the EYFS Writing Rainbow and the KS1/2 Writing Rainbow are based around three layers.

| The Writing Rainbows | |
|---|---|
| | |
| Fantastic Foundations EYFS | KS1/KS2 |
| FANTASTIC - The Ideas of writing | FANTASTICS - The Ideas of writing |
| CATALYTIC – Communication and quality exchanges | GRAMMARISTICS – The Tools of writing |
| REALISTIC – The craft of writing | BOOMTASTICS – The Techniques of writing |

The Writing Environment

The environment is an important aspect in writing development and reflects the high status attached to writing at The Federation of Spixworth Schools.

The writing environment will include:

- In EYFS – writing materials are part of indoor and outdoor free-flow provision areas, including in role play areas and not limited to writing area
- In Key Stage 1 – access to independent writing materials and opportunities to write through role play
- The outdoor environment is recognised as a natural stimulus for inspiration and purpose particularly in EYFS and Key Stage One
- Displays in classrooms promote our approach to the teaching of writing. The Writing Rainbow is always displayed and a working wall for writing is key to all classrooms
- Working walls are designed to emulate the children's books with a thinking and a writing side so that the teacher model is a duplication of the pupil's books. The structural shape of a text is revealed with the class. A visual map is used to showcase the writing journey and support children with the writing structure (plot points for fiction and jigsaw shapes for non-fiction). A character axis displays character highs and lows as the writing plot points are explored.
- Every class has a visible Sentence Stack. Sentence stacking is a highly visible text model, consisting of the children's own sentences giving high value to each child's contribution.
- Corridor display boards are used to demonstrate progression in writing and writing in other subjects.

Language Collections

Our writing approach has a high focus on vocabulary and the classrooms are embedded with collections of language. Examples include:

- Captions in the role play area in an EYFS classroom
- Children's writing books where words are generated during the initiate stage
- The shade-o-meter to promote sharp language choices through thesaurus thinking
- High quality sentences rich in vocabulary displayed within the children's collaborative sentence stack
- Classroom displays for spelling and other cross-curricular topics.

Health and safety

Specific considerations for this subject can be found in the Curriculum Risk Assessment, which is reviewed annually. A log is kept of all staff who have read and understood this assessment each year.

Cross curriculum links

Writing is never isolated to just our English lessons. We encourage writing across a range of subjects such as RE, History, Geography and Science. This is a great opportunity for the children transfer skills taught within their English lesson thus promote a mastery level of writing. We aim to establish a passion of 'writing for pleasure' amongst our pupils.

Inclusion and equality of opportunity

We are an inclusive school and adhere to the notion underpinned in the National Curriculum, that 'pupils...who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised' (p13). We set high expectations for all, regardless of age, race, gender or ability.

Where identified pupils are considered to require targeted support, in addition to their existing Literacy Provision, a variety of within school interventions are provided under the guidance of the Special Education Needs Coordinator. Where appropriate, further specialist support is sought. Progress of pupils receiving intervention is reviewed regularly. Pupils identified as more able will access suitably challenging teaching to deepen their skills.

Staff ensure children experience texts from many backgrounds and that reflect cultural diversity. Both boys and girls have access to all texts. Children will not be steered to books of a particular gender bias. On screen texts are accessible to all pupils. Extra support is sought for pupils to whom English is an additional language.

Impact

The Assessment of Writing

Teachers in all year groups use daily formative assessments to support progress within lessons and over time. Adults create classrooms where dialogue to provide personalised feedback is possible and powerful. Regular written feedback is also given, following the marking policy.

During lessons, structured self and peer assessment is often used as a feedback tool. Pedagogos marking stamps are used to highlight pupil's next steps through images. These next steps form targets (provided on the inside front cover of English books using the colour-coded termly target pencil format). Targets are updated at least half termly and each child has between one and three targets per half term.

End of Key Stage assessment grids from the local authority are used to track progress and attainment in Y2 and Y6. In-school tracking systems are used by all other year groups.

Summative assessments completed after the end of unit independent writing pieces assess children against year group expectations. Teachers make use of comparative judgement and moderate their assessments across classes. Individual pupil achievements are recorded and tracked in line with the Feedback, Marking and Assessment policy.

Families are kept informed regarding pupil progress through parent/teacher meetings which take place four times per year. These meetings will focus on the child's targets for the next 6-8 weeks. The child, parent and teacher will suggest what is going well and what could be improved. These three improvements will be the basis for the targets set and will be reviewed at the next meeting. These discussions then form part of the annual report of a pupil's progress which is issued at the end of the academic year.

SATs

Writing is teacher assessed and subject to internal and external moderation.

Staff training

Staff who join the school are able to access training materials on the English Curriculum Team Drive so that they can be immersed in our approach. Support is given from senior leaders as part of staff induction and training.

Monitoring and evaluation

The staff and Governors are committed to maintaining standards, establishing high expectations, and promoting effective teaching and learning. Procedures for monitoring and evaluation involve all members of the school community as part of the monitoring cycle.

A commitment to Assessment for Learning (AfL) endorses the school's participation in the National Curriculum and demonstrates an ethos in which the personalities, strengths and needs of children are considered and addressed individually. The monitoring and evaluating of practice enables the progress of individuals to be seen within the class and whole-school contexts of school and staff development.

The main purpose of monitoring, evaluation and review is to ensure that all members of the school community perform their roles effectively in order to maintain high standards of learning and teaching and raise achievements for all.

Areas which will be monitored and evaluated:

- Reading ethos and environment
- The effectiveness of teaching and Learning
- Standards of work and progress
- The reading environment
- The attitudes, behaviour and attainment of the children
- The reading curriculum, assessment and record keeping.

The range of approaches in monitoring and evaluating may include:

- Moderation exercises/internal standardisation – a comparison of children's work across classes and year groups
- Standardised tests
- Statutory assessment results
- Book looks
- Questionnaires/surveys/ audits
- Learning walks
- Whole-school self-evaluation
- Review meetings with staff and pupils
- The inspection process.

Roles and responsibilities

The Role of the Governing Body and Executive Head teacher is to:

- Approve and monitor the content of this policy.
- Liaise with the Executive Head, Heads of Schools, subject leaders and teachers with regards to pupil progress and attainment.
- Nominate a Governor to have specific responsibility for Curriculum including oversight, support and challenge
- Ensure the curriculum is inclusive and accessible to all.

The Role of the Head of School and Curriculum Leader is to:

- Devise long and medium term plans for the curriculum in collaboration with teachers, subject leaders and other members of the SLT.
- Communicate the agreed curriculum to the governing board on an annual basis.
- Ensure the curriculum is inclusive and accessible to all on a day-to-day basis.
- Assist teachers and subject leaders with the planning and implementation of the curriculum, ensuring their workload is manageable.
- Ensure the curriculum is implemented consistently throughout the school, ensuring any difficulties are addressed and mitigated as soon as possible.

The Role of the Subject Leader is to:

- Provide a strategic lead and direction, ensuring appropriate coverage of the curriculum.
- Keep up to date with developments in subject, at both national and local levels.
- Lead sustainable improvement through supporting colleagues and others.
- Monitor pupil progress.
- Provide efficient resource management.
- Review the way subjects are taught in the school and plan for improvement linking to whole school priorities.
- Ensure the School Improvement Plan priorities are monitored and consistently met.
- Monitor how their subjects are taught ensuring that appropriate teaching strategies are used.
- Reviewing curriculum plans for their key areas ensuring there is full coverage of the National Curriculum and that progression is planned for.
- Accurately judge standards within their subjects so they indicate the achievements of children at each key stage and indicate expectations of attainment.

The Role of the Class Teacher is to:

- Demonstrate a high level of knowledge of each subject they teach.
- Plan lessons with clear learning objectives that pupils understand.
- Demonstrate an enthusiasm for all themes and subjects.
- Know children as individuals, tailoring reaching to their needs.
- Identify barriers to learning and put strategies in place to overcome them.
- Build and maintain relationships with parents.
- Be able to accurately advise parents on how to further support their children at home.
- Reporting to parents on their child's progress across all areas of learning and development.
- To be an advocate of all learning to all learners.
- Be willing to be a learner as well as a teacher.
- Take on the responsibility for leading on a subject area.
- Act as a support partner for all other curriculum areas.
- Challenge and inspire pupils, expecting the most of them.
- Use a variety of methods to enable all pupils to learn effectively and will manage pupils well, insisting on high standards of behaviour at all times.
- Use time, support staff and other resources effectively.
- Use dialogue with pupils about their progress and their next steps.
- Reflect on their personal strengths and weaknesses and to be proactive to plan their own professional development needs.

The Role of the SENCO is to:

- Collaborate with the Executive Head, Head of School, Curriculum Leader and teachers to ensure the curriculum is accessible to all.
- Ensure teaching materials do not discriminate against anyone in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- Carry out SEND assessments where necessary and ensuring pupils receive the additional help they need.
- Liaise with external agencies where necessary to ensure pupils who require additional support receive it.

Review

- This policy is reviewed every two years by the SLT and the governor responsible for Curriculum.
- Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and relevant stakeholders.