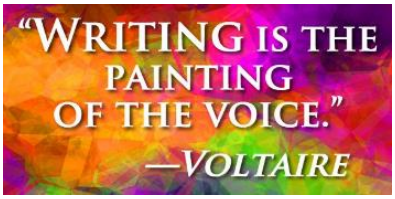
English – Writing

Intent



At Mapperley Plains, we aim to give our children a writing curriculum which enables them to become confident, creative and independent writers who are well able to articulate their own ideas. We support our children to develop transferable skills which they can use across the wider curriculum and throughout their lives. We use educational visits, high quality literature, film, art and music as stimuli for writing which links learning to real life experience and provides and contextualised, meaningful curriculum. Mapperley Plains writers leave with a strong independent writer's voice and the technical skills necessary to communicate clearly in the modern world.

We offer an English (writing) curriculum which equips our children with key skills, knowledge and vocabulary motivated by our curriculum drivers:

- **Initiative -** We encourage our children to develop their independence, empowering them to act and be responsible for their own learning about which they can clearly state and explain their opinions.
- **Inclusivity -** We pride ourselves on being an inclusive school that cares for every individual child. In doing so, we promote and deliver a range of strategies to ensure that we value everyone. We want the children to recognise and celebrate diversity existing in our world, instilling pride in individuality.
- **Resilience -** We relentlessly focus on developing children who are resilient, who can adapt to and recover from tough or challenging situations. We encourage the children to try their best in all that they do.
- **Possibilities -** We encourage the children to build aspirations, identify talents and know possibilities for their future lives.

We ensure the curriculum is **Relevant and Memorable.** The unique needs of our children, along with our culture, climate and events shape our curriculum.

Our aim is to ensure that a writer leaving Mapperley Plains will:

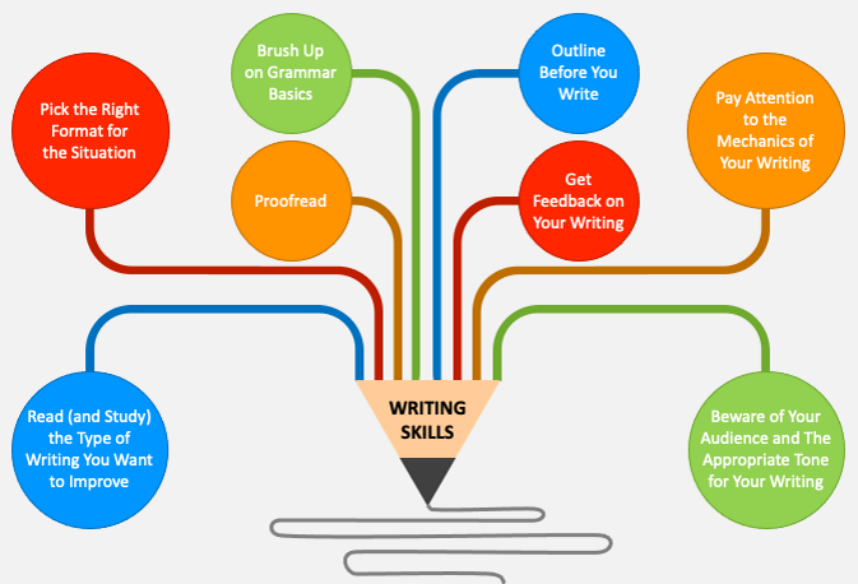
- See themselves as a writer
- Have established an appreciation and love of writing
- Be able to write clearly, accurately and coherently
- Have a wide vocabulary and an understanding of grammar
- Be able to adapt their language and style for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- Understand and appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- Have developed knowledge of themselves and the world they live in and gained knowledge across the curriculum

English – Writing

Implementation

As a school, we follow our progression maps for English (Writing), devised from the Early Years Framework and National Curriculum Guidelines. These ensure all aspects, knowledge and skills of English (Writing) are taught across all year groups. We have progression maps for Writing composition and Vocabulary, Spelling and Grammar and Handwriting (transcription) from F1-Y6.

As a school, we follow the National Curriculum for English (Writing). The overarching aim for English in the National Curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. It also states that children should acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language. We want our children to be able to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.



We ensure our children leave us not only with the skills needed for the next part of their journey, but with a rich body of knowledge both **substantive** (the factual knowledge for each subject) and **disciplinary** knowledge (the action taken within a subject to gain knowledge).

We have adopted a thematic approach to our curriculum. The particular 'theme' chosen is always relevant to the children and is designed to be exciting and engaging for that particular cohort. To prevent the creation of tenuous links, discrete subjects are taught where necessary.

We start our themes with an exciting big question/ theme title to develop curiosity and help children to lead their own learning e.g. 'Why is Brazil in the news again?' or 'Why is the Earth so awesome?'

English – Writing

The Teaching of Writing

Writing is taught in a variety of ways at Mapperley Plains Primary School.

English (Writing) lessons

Early Years

Foundation Stage 1

In F1, we focus on the following prime areas which underpin writing skills.

Communication and Language	Listening and Understanding	Fine and Gross Motor Skills
• Rhyme Time • 5 a day • Oral retelling stories • Phonics Phase 1 (daily session)	• Story times, circle times, listening games • Questioning and discussing • Modelling sharing thoughts on texts I wonder questions….	• Continuous provision and enhancements • Fine motor activities: tweezers, threading, playdough • Gross Motor Activities: climbing, large construction, den building • Squiggle • Dough Disco

We also encourage independent writing and mark making in the following ways:

- As part of continuous provision, we have a variety of resources and equipment to support writing and mark making in different ways, such as pens, paint, chalk, paper, whiteboards etc.
- Providing inviting and engaging stimulus to inspire ideas for writing and mark making
- Encouraging name recognition and writing with the support of an adult
- Writing for purpose in areas such as the role play, maths and creative areas

English – Writing

Foundation Stage 2

Drawing Club

In F2, our Literacy is taught through Drawing Club. This provides an inviting and engaging stimulus to inspire ideas for writing and mark making. These lessons happen 4/5 times a week and consist of 4 mini moments around a high-quality text, traditional tale or animation. Through Drawing Club, children are given space to explore and adapt the characters and setting of the text and look at ways to change the narrative of the text.

The 4 mini moments typically look like this:

Vocabulary	Story Sharing	Modelled Drawing and Writing	Drawing Club
Vocabulary that is featured or linked to the story is introduced in an active way.	The story is read or played to the children. They are then given the opportunity to adapt features of the story including the characters, setting and story arch (plot).	Within the session the teacher models adapting the story and drawing a picture and code to represent their ideas. This varies to match the children's next steps.	The class teacher then supports a group of 6 children to move drawing and writing on to children's next steps.

In addition to those already referred to in F1, we also encourage independent writing and mark making in the following ways:

- Mark making opportunities in all areas
- Enhancements linked to the topic/text and children's interests
- Opportunities for purposeful writing and mark making
- Opportunities to share their mark making and writing with an adult and give meaning to the marks they make. This includes their writing books, learning squares and within Drawing Club
- Opportunities for writing during Little Wandle phonics lessons in the form of spelling in Autumn and writing sentences in Spring and Summer.

English – Writing

Year 1

Curious Quests



In Year 1, our English is taught through Drawing Club in the first half of the Autumn term before progressing to Curious Quests for the rest of the year. These lessons happen 4/5 times a week and consist of 8 mini moments around a high-quality text, traditional tale or animation. Curious Quests has many similarities with Drawing Club in terms of the way it is delivered.

The 8 mini moments typically look like this:

Word Bathing	**From The Portal**	**The Gadabout**	**The Quest Codes**
Vocabulary that is featured or linked to the story is introduced in an active way.	This involves sharing the 'objective' – what skill is needed for the Curious Quest.	The children are given an opportunity to parade around, chant and immerse in actions and responses to questions about the story.	The class teacher shares the joy of SPaG and handwriting. This is taken from the National Curriculum and is progressive in approach.
The Book Snuggle	**The Modelled Drawing**	**Time Together & Inventing**	**To The Portal**
The story is read or played to the children.	Within the session the teacher models adapting the story and drawing a picture and code to represent their ideas. This varies to match the children's next steps.	The class teacher then supports groups of children (on a rotation) to move drawing and writing on to children's next steps.	This is an opportunity to gather and share the inventions, drawings and codes from the 'Time Together & Inventing' mini moment.

English – Writing

Years 2-6

In Year 2 through to Year 6, children have a daily English lesson. These lessons have children's literature at the core. We have a book-based curriculum and develop sequences of learning within this, lasting 2-3 weeks. Please refer to our detailed English long term plans for more information.

Typical features of these sequences of learning include:

- A 'hook' for initial engagement with the text e.g. playing a music or an animation, a book trailer, a cover reveal etc.
- Contextualising grammar and punctuation, using examples from the text to pull out spelling patterns
- Drama to create a bridge between reading and writing e.g. rumours, statues, hot-seating, freeze frames etc.
- Talk to enhance writing – before, during and after
- Writing and drafting, including shared writing, modelled writing, guided writing and scaffolded writing
- Proof-reading (checking for errors) and editing (transforming the content)

Across the whole school, we also place emphasis on the following areas within the teaching of writing:

Choice of texts

Teachers choose their own texts to form the basis of the writing sequences, with support and direction from the English Leads. A wide range of high-quality texts are chosen and these may link to current areas of study and/or promote diversity through the inclusion of protected characteristics. However, texts must be chosen primarily on how well they can enable the English curriculum to be taught. Texts will include a variety of genres, as well as whole books. Whole books are essential for many reasons including plot and character development as well as identifying themes. We have a quality texts overview for the whole school.

Writing motivation

Children should feel motivated to write. We do this in a variety of ways:

- Ensuring the learning is clear and using modelling to support this
- Making the learning real by having a real audience and purpose
- Making the learning meaningful. Sometimes this is possible by relating writing activities to the children's lives and experiences
- Giving choice and autonomy, as and when appropriate

English – Writing

The frequency of writing

Children should be given an opportunity to write frequently. This includes within the daily English lesson but also at other times within the school day. Examples of writing opportunities at Mapperley Plains include:

- Morning writing e.g. using Pobble 365 or Once Upon A Picture
- Quick writes/short burst writes
- Cross-curricular writing
- Writing for pleasure

In other curriculum areas, we use Knowledge Organisers in lessons to support with the transference of knowledge from the working memory into the long term memory. Key knowledge is re-visited as part of regular retrieval opportunities throughout the theme and across the year. Ongoing formative assessment is used to ensure all lessons are relevant and supports with planning next steps. Children are given lots of opportunities to visit prior learning through low stakes mini-quizzes and other revisit tasks which allow teachers to measure their level of understanding.

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar

The teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar is embedded within writing lessons so that children learn these skills and use them in context. Explicit teaching of grammar and punctuation in meaningful contexts is a core component of our writing cycle. Our curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure that children build a secure understanding of grammatical features and learn to apply them effectively in a range of contexts.

However, spelling is also taught explicitly in each year group. In Early Years and KS1, spelling is a focus of Phonics teaching, which is taught using the Little Wandle programme. In Key Stage 2, children follow the Spelling Shed programme (stages 3 and 4 then stages 5 and 6, on a two-year cycle).

For more detailed information, please look at the progression maps for Writing Composition and Vocabulary, Spelling and Grammar; the Spelling Shed medium term plans and the Little Wandle Spelling coverage.

Handwriting

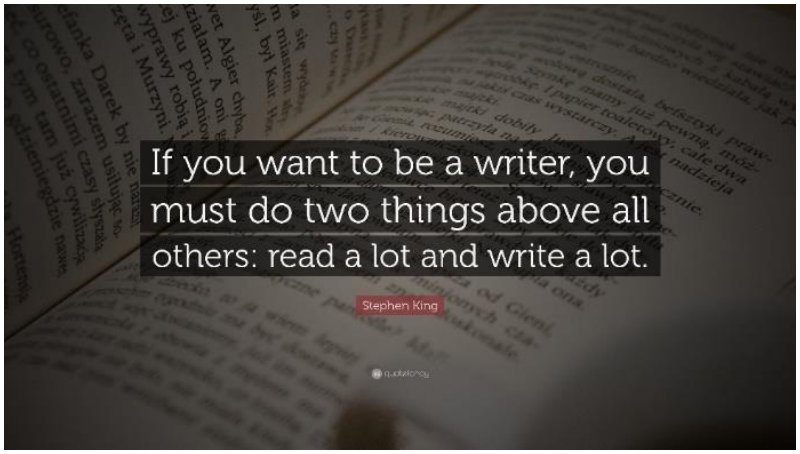
We teach children to use a continuous cursive style of handwriting using the MSL handwriting scheme. In EYFS, we start with individual letter formation and correct pencil grip. Children begin to join when their letter formation is secure; usually, from the end of Year 1. Children are expected to produce neat, joined, legible handwriting at all times. For more detailed information, please look at the progression maps for handwriting, including the MSL scheme and coverage and whole school handwriting progression overview.

English – Writing

Supporting our current lower-attaining children

Using our assessment tools children who are found to be not meeting age related expectations are quickly identified and support is put into place. This will be in discussion with the class teacher, subject leaders and SENCO. Children with SEND are appropriately challenged in English (Writing) by:

- Using teaching methods which match the needs of children.
- Chunking content into smaller steps and ensuring the curriculum is designed to reduce excessive or unhelpful demands on working memory.
- Ensuring adaptations are based on individual needs and aim to retain ambition for children with SEND.
- Understanding that, for children with more complex SEND needs, it may be appropriate to have different curriculum expectations.



English – Writing

Impact

Through the high quality teaching of writing, we will see:

- Children who see writing as an interesting and enjoyable process
- Children who write fluently; demonstrating a broad vocabulary and confidence in using grammatical techniques
- Children who can make links to prior learning and connections to other texts that they have read or heard to influence their own writing style
- Children who understand the importance of writing in the wider world
- A school environment that is text-rich through use of the outdoor environment, displays, resources, vocabulary etc.
- Assessments and monitoring that show high standards in writing

Assessment of Writing

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it. Children are assessed regularly in line with the school's Assessment Policy using a variety of strategies. Day to day assessments are carried out using formative assessment; these assessments inform planning and areas to be targeted to close the gap are identified.

Teacher Assessments

EYFS

Children's writing is assessed at regular assessment points (Autumn Baseline, Autumn 2, Spring, Summer). Benchmarking is completed using the 'I can' statements. Within the classroom, all adults working with the children use a writing tracker to identify next steps in writing.

Years 1 - 6

Each half term, we assess children's independent writing twice. We use school-developed writing checklists in line with curriculum expectations, consisting of 'pupil can' statements. To judge that a pupil is working at a standard in English writing, teachers need to have evidence which demonstrates that the pupil meets the standard described overall. In years 2 and 6, we use the end of key stage TAFs.

English – Writing

Moderation

The moderation of writing is planned into our assessment cycle and this takes place at least termly, if not more frequently within staff teams and phases. At least once a year, we undertake a moderation exercise with the local family of schools in order to ensure our judgements are accurate.

How we use the writing data

Data from assessments, using a combination of formative and summative assessments, is shared with senior leaders in Pupil Progress Meetings which occur three times across the year. Data is entered into the school's online tracking system using OTrack. Next step decisions are considered and intervention strategies are put in place to close the gap as appropriate.

Quality assurance

The writing subject leaders are given dedicated non-contact time to use the triangulation model of monitoring to quality assure teaching and learning. The subject leader monitors reading across the school through a range of monitoring activities which might include: learning walks, book scrutiny, discussions with pupils, resource audits etc. Subject feedback is shared with teachers and school leaders.

