



St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School

Writing Policy

St Cuthbert's Mission Statement

God made us all unique
To learn, live and grow
To show care, concern and friendship
To be the best we can
Showing Christ's love in all we do.

Writing Policy

VISION AND AIMS

At St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School we place a high importance on children developing a life-long love of writing and strive to provide a rich and inspiring English curriculum for this to be achieved. We believe it is vital that our children develop the skills and knowledge not only to be 'secondary school ready' but to go on to become confident and effective communicators in the outside world.

Our aims for the teaching and learning of writing are that all children should:

- Value writing as a means of communicating for a wide range of purposes to a wide range of audiences.
- Be able to write effectively, in different styles and genres and for enjoyment.
- To write with neat handwriting, correct spelling and accurate punctuation and grammar.
- Be able to communicate effectively and with confidence using Standard Written English.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are set out in the National Curriculum in England: English Programmes of Study – Key Stages 1 and 2 (2014) and in the Communication and Language and Literacy sections of the Early Years Foundation Profile (2021).

TEACHING AND LEARNING

At St Cuthbert's, we aim to inspire our children to have a love of writing. We aim to plan our lessons so that they engage and capture the children's interest, providing purpose and audience, giving them a reason to write and using a wide range of teaching strategies as detailed in our 'Teaching and Learning Agreement'.

APPROACHES USED TO TEACH WRITING

EYFS and Year 1

During their first years of school, children are strengthening their fine and gross motor skills which in turn support the development of their writing. We therefore include a range of opportunities in the provision for children to develop their fine and gross motor skills, for example, using tweezers to pick up items, using water and paint brushes to make marks outside and manipulating playdough.

We value that at this stage, children are emergent writers where they will make marks in their play before moving onto forming letters and words. Therefore, the class environment, including the outdoor area, is set up so that children can access a range of materials to mark make with, for example they can use paint, pencil, chalk, and sand.

As children begin phonics sessions, children are encouraged during their play and in adult led activities to apply their newly taught phonics skills and to 'have a go' at writing. Every attempt at mark making and writing is valued. To encourage children to practise their phonic skills and to write in their play, motivating purposes for them to write are provided alongside a range of interesting resources for them to use.

In Year 1 from the spring term onwards and after a transition term from Early Years into the National Curriculum, children participate in English lessons to further develop their early writing skills. During these sessions, the class teacher will focus on the composition aspect of writing as set out in The National Curriculum (2014) for Year 1.

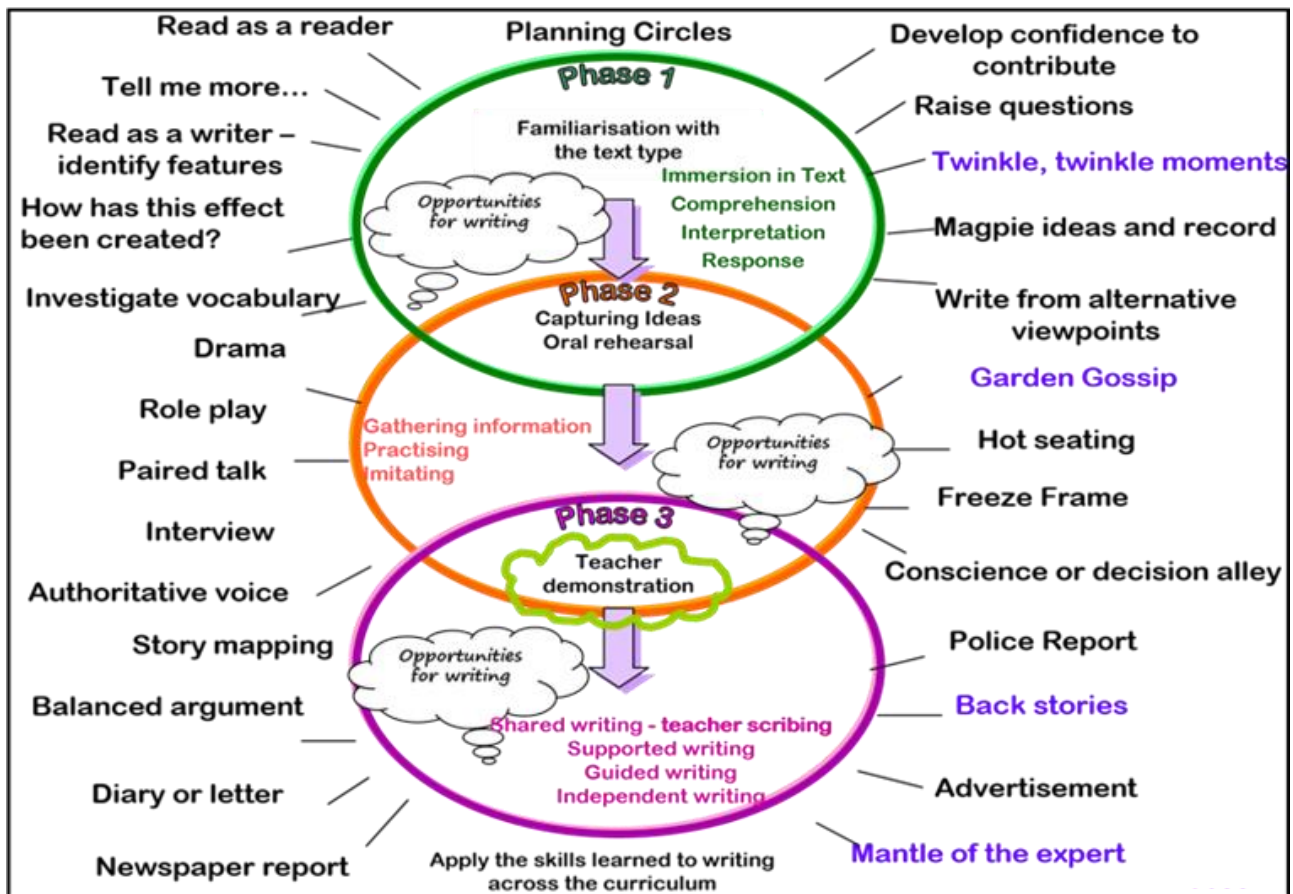
We use a range of strategies to teach writing, these include teacher modelling, guided writing in small groups, writing in pairs, using drama and stories to stimulate ideas for writing and giving children exciting and purposeful reasons to write. Throughout the term children will be given opportunities to write a range of poetry, non-fiction and narrative.

Year 2 – Year 6

From Year 2 onwards, children will continue to have a combination of discrete daily English sessions and the opportunity to apply English knowledge and skills in other subject areas. Children build on previous skills and are taught the composition aspects set out in The National Curriculum (2014) for their individual year group to develop children into independent, confident writers. Children are taught to write in a variety of genres which will include types of poetry, narrative and nonfiction as detailed in our Reading/Writing Text Coverage document.

Children are taught to write using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies including: reading and accessing rich texts for analysis, genre checklists and skeleton planners and planning frames. The school uses the teaching sequence from reading into writing to teach writing.

The Teaching Sequence from Reading into Writing



At St Cuthbert's, teaching writing to children happens over a series of scaffolded stages.

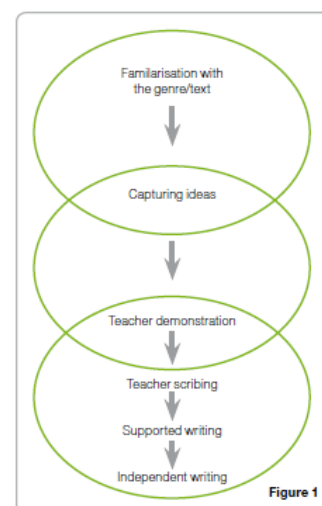
4 Scaffolded Stages of Writing

The stages are:

- Modelled Writing
- Shared Writing
- Guided Writing
- Independent Writing

Improving writing through quality first teaching

Engaging the children as readers in a quality text type/genre at the outset of the unit provides a critical reference point throughout the subsequent learning experience. By developing personal responses to texts and understanding how they as readers have been manipulated, the children extend their understanding of the patterns and cadences of the text type/genre.



Typical approaches used by teachers at the familiarisation phase in the planning process include:

- reading for pleasure and enjoyment of the text;
- learning the reading skills required by the format and medium of publishing, such as reading onscreen;
- higher order comprehension reading skills, for example, to identify the author's intent;
- reading as a writer to identify structures, vocabulary and techniques for use in their own writing.

The process of capturing ideas begins once the children are secure with a text type/genre. At this stage in the writing process the children explore the text type/genre through quality experiences that support the transfer of patterns, structures and cadences of the text into their spoken language. This process is sometimes referred to as 'talk for writing'.

Modelled Writing:

- Is a think aloud about strategies
- It utilises a problem-solving approach
- It gives the children the opportunity to understand the choices a writer makes during the writing process

Modelled writing is the first step in teaching writing to children. This is when the teacher is in front of the class demonstrating the writing process. The teacher articulates the process and emphasis specific teaching points related to the lesson objectives.

If the children struggle with getting their ideas going, come back to this basic step and model your writing process for them. They need to see it being done.

Make your thoughts about the process known (be explicit) while you are teaching writing to children. The key to modelled writing is to never assume the children are following you. Tell them everything you are doing and why. It is not enough for them just to watch you.

During shared writing a teacher will scribe the words but the children are now invited to contribute to the piece.

- Children contribute ideas while the teacher writes
- Lots of discussion, questions and answers

Guided writing

Guided writing is the third step in teaching writing to children and is an essential component of a balanced writing curriculum, providing an additional supported step towards independent writing. It contributes to the teaching sequence as exemplified in the Primary Framework. Through guided writing, children are supported during the different stages of the writing process.

As an activity, it should be carefully targeted towards groups of children according to their current targets or specific needs. Within the teaching sequence, guided writing would normally follow on from shared writing, though not necessarily during the same session.

Teachers should consider carefully the purpose of the guided session and select the children accordingly. The aim is to provide support that is going to help children to improve their writing and to work with increasing independence.

What are the benefits of guided writing?

Guided writing:

- enables the teacher to tailor the teaching to the needs of the group;
- facilitates the teaching and learning of individual children. Although guided writing is a group activity focused on the needs of the group, the teacher is able to observe and respond to the needs of individuals within the group;

- provides the teacher with the opportunity to extend and challenge more-able groups of children;
- encourages the children to be active participants in discussions about writing;
- builds confidence – the group are all grappling with the same issues;
- allows the teacher to give immediate feedback on success and the opportunity to discuss further areas for improvement.

Guided Writing and Assessment for Learning

Guided writing is underpinned by effective AfL. Guided writing sessions provide opportunities for ongoing assessment. Teachers identify the learning needs of children based on their assessments; they set precise writing targets that will address the needs of each group. The teacher explains the targets to the group and regularly reviews them with the children. Feedback is provided at every stage; this may take the form of self-assessment, peer-assessment or teacher-assessment.

Key characteristics of AfL	Effective practice in guided writing
Creating the conditions for learning that will support AfL.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The learning environment is supportive of AfL. ■ Secure rationale for ethos and attitudes to learning in place. ■ Routines and behaviours established – children clear about organisation for guided writing and how to learn as part of a group.
Using curricular targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The process of curricular target setting is well established in the school. ■ Group curricular targets are informed and identified by analysis of children's writing and through discussion. ■ Children are fully aware of their targets and understand the process of reviewing them.
Designing opportunities for learning: planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ There is a clear focus on learning objectives, which feed into curricular target setting. ■ Success criteria are clear and understood by the children. ■ Teaching is adjusted to take account of ongoing assessment.
Day-to-day assessment strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Effective use of the following strategies is in place during guided writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – questioning; – observing; – discussing; – analysing – marking and assessing writing with the children; – checking children's understanding.
Feedback on learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Providing effective oral and written feedback to children in the group. ■ Developing peer-assessment. ■ Developing self-assessment. ■ Ensuring children are clear about the next steps needed to improve their writing.

Independent Writing

- Students use ideas from shared writing to produce their own independent piece

This part of teaching writing to children must always include a time to share their writing with peers and staff. This provides them not only recognition, but an opportunity to receive feedback and make amendments to their independent writing.

For more information, please see our Teaching and Learning Agreement.

GRAMMAR PUNCTUATION AND SPELLING (GPS)

The teaching of GPS is taught in line with The National Curriculum (2014). Each year group, from year 1, uses the National Curriculum (2014) to identify the terminology and skills needed to be taught during the year. These objectives are detailed on our Planning and Assessment Grids GPS Y1 to Y6.

Children in Reception are taught the spellings of High Frequency Words including those that are non-decodable. Children in Year 1 continue to learn High Frequency words including those that are non-decodable in addition to the words set out in the National Curriculum. As children move into Year 2 and through to Year 6 they continue to learn spelling rules and spellings set out in the National Curriculum. Spellings are taught discretely through GPS lessons and tested weekly.

Punctuation and grammar is taught to children in Year 1 as part of their English Lessons and from Year 2 onwards, children have discrete sessions which focus on key elements of punctuation or grammar.

HANDWRITING

Handwriting is taught regularly through short, focused sessions and may be linked with spelling, grammar, or phonics objectives. Teaching generally occurs outside English lessons, although shared and guided writing also provides additional opportunities for the modelling and monitoring of handwriting. Teaching and Learning Handwriting is a skill which needs to be taught explicitly. Since handwriting is essentially a movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed style by the teacher is very important; it is not sufficient to require pupils to copy models from a published scheme or worksheet.

We expect all handwriting, across the curriculum to be of an excellent standard. Handwriting should be clearly legible, formed correctly, effectively joined, and beautifully presented. Children should take pride in the work they produce.

St Cuthbert's promotes the principles of 'Nelson' handwriting scheme and celebrates the individuality and creativity that pupils bring to their style. Consistency in the attitudes displayed, the methods employed, and the models provided is the key to effective learning. A mixture of whole class, small group and individual teaching is planned.

For more information, please see our specific Handwriting Policy.

APPROACHES USED TO TEACH AND SUPPORT SPOKEN LANGUAGE

We recognise the importance of spoken language in pupils' development, especially as it underpins the development of writing. We offer all pupils a language rich environment where their ideas are sought and valued. Children are encouraged to develop their communication skills throughout the school in a variety of contexts.

In EYFS and Year 1 examples of these include:

- Role Play
- Small World play
- Weekly 'Show and Tell' sessions
- Story time
- Listening to instructions on sound buttons
- Rhymes and songs
- Circle time discussions for example in PSHE and RE
- Recording their ideas on video using the I-pad
- Talk partners to discuss answers with before sharing with the class.
- Nativity and class assemblies

From Year 2 – Year 6 examples of these include:

- Talk partners
- Role play / drama activities
- Using film to record their ideas / to explain concepts.
- Debates / discussions during English and other curriculum areas.
- Performance and class assemblies
- School Council
- Circle time discussions for example in PSHE and RE

For more information, please see our Speaking and Listening Policy.

ASSESSMENT OF WRITING

EYFS

- On entry baseline assessment of Communication and Language and Literacy.
- Ongoing teacher assessments and observations throughout the year recorded on e-learning journeys.
- Termly assessment against all Prime Areas and Literacy (Numeracy) and recorded on school tracking document.
- End of year assessments to assess progress made from their individual starting points and if children have met the Early Learning Goals.

Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

Formative Assessment

Teachers use 'assessment for learning' to ensure that planning and activities for children to complete build upon children's existing knowledge. It is used to assess how children are progressing in every session so that support and challenge can be given immediately to ensure all pupils make progress.

Teachers will use a variety of formative assessment strategies during lessons which include:

- Providing a clear learning objective, checklists and appropriate frames and scaffolds.
- Giving verbal feedback to individuals during the lesson.
- Marking children's books with regular next steps when appropriate.
- Peer and self-assessments.

For more information, please see our Marking and Feedback for Learning Policy.

Summative Assessments

Writing is assessed and recorded termly on the school's tracker to check children are on track to achieve their targets and are making at least expected progress. These assessments are used to the set termly priorities in writing.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH A SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED OR DISABILITY (SEND)

All children receive 'Quality First Teaching'. English lessons are planned and adapted effectively so that all the children are not only supported in their learning but are also given the appropriate challenge to enable them to make progress. Appropriate and reasonable adjustments are made to how the curriculum is delivered, and the resources provided so that children who have a special educational need or disability can continue to access the curriculum. Children with SEND have a 'Person Centred Plan (PCP)' which details the interventions and additional support the child is receiving for English, if required for this curriculum area.

This policy will be reviewed as and when necessary.