

Writing Rationale

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, we want all children to be able to confidently communicate their knowledge, ideas and emotions through their writing and reach their full potential. We want children to be excited by the possibilities that writing brings and to be enthusiastic and proactive word collectors.

Children have access to a wide and diverse range of age-appropriate texts and writing stimuli. They experience purposeful opportunities through literature to discuss our Catholic Values and Virtues; important aspects of British values; mental health and well-being; and citizenship. Through high quality teaching and targeted support, according to individual needs, all children will succeed and become confident and fluent writers who are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Intent

At St Mary's we intend to cultivate a vibrant writing culture that empowers our pupils to express their creativity and communicate effectively across a range of contexts. Our writing curriculum, grounded in RWI Phonics and Write Stuff approach by Jane Considine in Key Stage 2, is designed to foster a love of writing while developing the core skills necessary for effective written communication. We aim to ensure:

- **Inclusivity:** Every child, regardless of their starting point, is supported and encouraged to become a confident writer. We embrace diversity and adapt our teaching strategies to meet individual needs.
- **Engagement:** We inspire pupils through engaging texts and a variety of writing opportunities, including narrative, poetry, non-fiction, and persuasive writing. The Write Stuff approach promotes dynamic and interactive writing experiences, ensuring pupils understand and appreciate the power of writing in different forms.
- **Rigorous Progression:** Our curriculum provides a clear progression of skills from Early Years to Year 6, ensuring that pupils are consistently challenged and supported in improving their writing abilities (see progression documents)
- **Integration with Other Subjects:** We recognise that writing is a fundamental skill that permeates all areas of the curriculum. Therefore, we seek to integrate writing into cross-curricular activities, allowing pupils to apply their skills in meaningful contexts.

Implementation

To implement our writing intent effectively, we adopt the following practices:

- **High-Quality Texts:** We select a diverse range of high-quality texts that reflect the pupils' interests and backgrounds. These texts are used as examples for writing styles and techniques, fostering critical appreciation and inspiration. (See writing unit spine)
- **Explicit Instruction:** Writing instruction involves explicit teaching of key skills, including grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary. The Write Stuff model practices key concepts, enabling pupils to grasp and apply writing techniques effectively through engaging frameworks.
- **Regular Writing Opportunities:** Writing is a regular feature of our daily timetable, featuring both independent and collaborative tasks. Children are well supported at every stage of their writing journey, providing structured writing sessions that encourage creativity while reinforcing skill development.
- **Feedback and Assessment:** We provide timely and constructive feedback through live marking and written marking. Children's writing is shared and celebrated under visualisers and peer marked as a class, enabling children to successfully self-edit. Children are encouraged to reflect on and improve their writing, fostering a growth mindset.
- **Celebration of Writing:** We celebrate students' writing through displays, writing competitions and publishing their work via different channels such as Class Dojo, YouTube and the school website.
- **Professional Development for Staff:** We invest in ongoing professional development for our teachers, ensuring they stay updated with best practices in teaching writing, including training on the Write Stuff approach, RWI Phonics and effective feedback methods.

Firm Foundations in EYFS and KS1

We use Read Write Inc Phonics (RWI) in Reception and KS1 to give your child the best possible start with their English. Children receive a solid foundation using the RWI scheme from the first week they start their school life at St Mary's.

To begin writing at St Mary's they will:

- learn to write the letters/letter groups which represent the 44 sounds
- learn to write words by saying the sounds and graphemes
- learn to build sentences orally using adventurous vocabulary
- start with simple sentences and develop towards more complex ones by the end of the programme

Spelling with your Fred Fingers

- Children are taught to use their fingers to help them write words. The children say the word out loud and break it down into its individual sounds. If a word has 3 sounds children hold up 3 fingers, 4 sounds 4 fingers etc. Children pinch each finger as they say the sounds needed in the word then they write the letters that represent each sound.
- When using Fred Fingers each finger represents one sound. When children reach yellow Read Write Inc. storybooks, they will learn to trace the letters onto each finger and say the letter names



Early Writing

In EYFS and KS1 our children develop the necessary early writing skills to prepare them for KS2. At St. Mary's we have developed an approach that introduces children to the idea of vocabulary gathering, building on their knowledge in phonics, to develop their writing. We follow a four-step approach to writing lessons:

- **Immersion:** read story, act it out, order/sequence, Oracy – tell the story to talk partner, discuss vocabulary, definitions, collect vocabulary, characterisation, immersion in the genre, book talk, write questions, settings,
- **Rehearsal:** rehearsing skills of the genre, rehearsing basic skills
- **Plan:** story maps/boxed plan/mind map
- **Process:** writing and editing

This four-step approach acts as a bridge for our pupils ensuring a smooth transition from KS1 to KS2.

KS2 Writing

From KS2, we use '*The Write Stuff*' approach, by Jane Considine, to bring clarity to the mechanics of writing. '*The Write Stuff*' approach, used from Year 3, dovetails beautifully with the firm foundations in writing children experience in EYFS and KS1. '*The Write Stuff*' follows a method called 'Sentence Stacking' which refers to the fact that sentences are

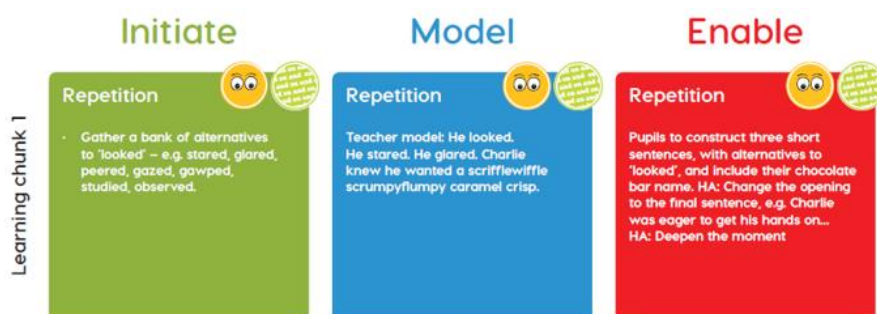
stacked together and organised to engage children with short, intensive moments of learning that they can then immediately apply to their own writing. This approach makes sure that all of our children are exposed to high quality texts that stimulate quality responses to reading; high quality writing; and purposeful speaking and listening opportunities. 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. We believe that children need lots of rich speaking and listening activities (oracy) to give them the imagination and the experiences that will equip them to become good independent writers.

A 'Write Stuff' lesson - Purposeful, Precise & Powerful

The 'Write Stuff' is based on two guiding principles; teaching sequences that slide between experience days and sentence stacking lessons. With modelling at the heart of them, the sentence stacking lessons are broken into bite-sized chunks and taught under the structural framework of The Writing Rainbow (see below)

Teachers prepare children for writing by modelling the ideas, grammar or techniques of writing. Each lesson is split into 3 chunks:

- Initiate section – a stimulus to capture the children’s imagination and set up a sentence.
- Model section – the teacher close models a sentence that outlines clear writing features and techniques.
- Enable section – the children write their sentence, following the model.



'The Write Stuff' also reinforces grammar through the use of:

- The FANTASTICs which are an acronym that summarise the ideas of writing
- The GRAMMARISTICs are a classroom tool that enables the teacher to drive key grammar messages.
- The BOOMTASTICs which helps children capture 10 ways of adding drama and poetic devices to writing in a vivid visual – see below



Key Stuff:

- Support they have a flexible sentence
- Pupils to apply their as they develop their expertise.

benefits of The Write

for teachers so that deeper and more knowledge of structure.

who understand how sentence scaffolds to independent writing

- Standards improve because many worked examples are provided over the year that extend understanding through a wide range of genres and non-fiction text types.
- Children have a clear view of what high quality writing looks like and their learning is structured clearly and misconceptions dealt with.
- Pupils know how to improve their writing and make it more focussed and actionable feedback is provided to guide their learning.
- Children have a concept of how to build, plan and complete a piece of writing due to narrative maps and non-fiction shapes.
- Teachers have clear pathways of how to guide pupils in weak areas such as cohesion and paragraphs.

How does the Write Stuff improve outcomes for all children?

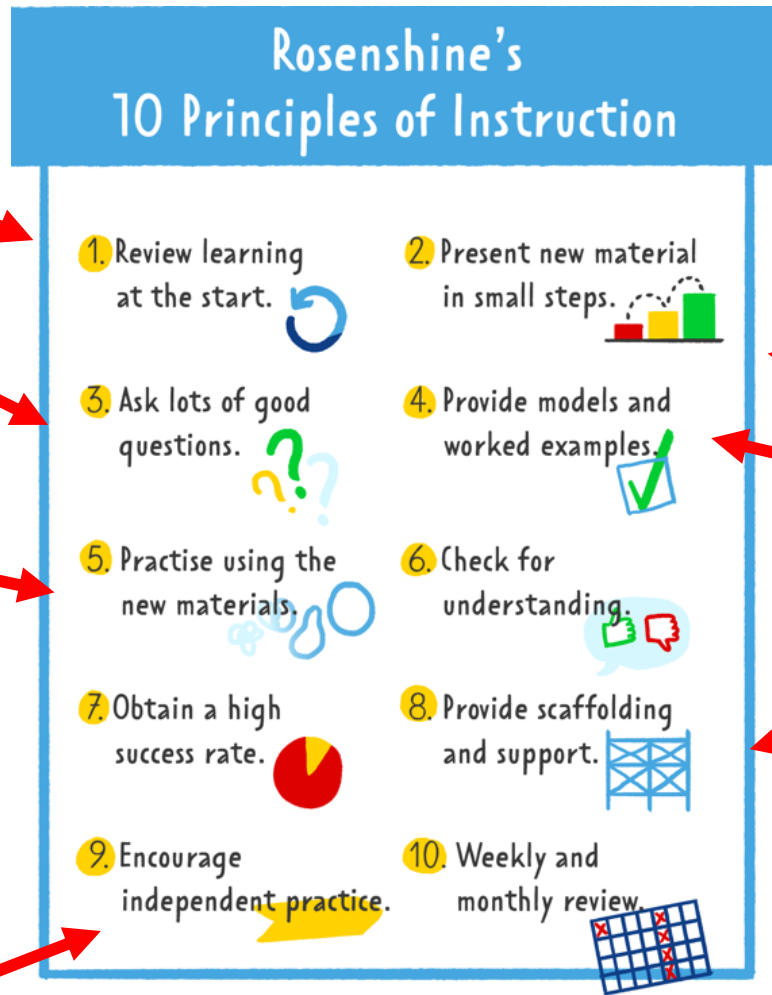
The Write Stuff uses effective approaches for tackling varying starting points for all groups of children. Recent recommendations from the EEF to improve Literacy standards in KS2, suggest that teachers should explicitly teach writing composition strategies through modelling and supported practice, which is precisely what the *Write Stuff* does, through its 'Initiate, Model, Enable' approach. We need to make it our job to help all children with varying starting points become confident and independent writers.

- **Experiences** - every unit ensures that all children have experiences to build ideas and create a strong starting point from which to write. There are no assumptions, the experience days are varied and provide an opportunity to talk and build up a vocabulary bank which is meaningful. We have a strong oracy thread running through each year group at St Mary's. Each Key Stage have specific oracy sentence stems and

oracy guidelines which link with the experience days. The experience has a direct link to the learning.

- **The Writing Rainbow** scaffolds learning, providing clear ideas, tools and techniques for writing.
- **Vocabulary and words are integral to every lesson.** This provides opportunities for children to be exposed to a growing number of words and begin to identify the effect and nuance they bring to the meaning of the writing (see St Mary's Tier 2 and Tier 3 Vocabulary progression that provide additional vocabulary acquisition)
- **High expectations on all children.** A strong, high quality model will direct the children to craft high quality sentences themselves.
- **Success drives motivation** and working in sentences with clear goals sets an achievable target for children of all abilities. Building writing over time in a directed way provides the support needed to deliver independent writing at a later date.
- **Relationships are developed** through the approach; talk partners, kind calling out and sentence selection and appreciation all provide a positive and respectful learning relationship to evolve between pupils and adults.
- **All children including our most vulnerable have a voice within the approach.** The expectation to CHOT (chat and jot) and 'Kind Calling Out' mean everyone's contribution can be valued. Learning is active not passive.
- **Feedback through sentence stacking wall** promotes appreciation, independence and a sense of ownership. The feedback is more likely to be well received due to the positive relationships and the sense of success and ownership.
- **The structure of the lessons** into chunks prevents the working memory being overloaded and therefore offers a higher chance of success, building self-esteem and motivation. At St Mary's, we have worked hard to build in Rosenshine's principles of teaching into our lessons (see below) and The *Write Stuff* allows for this.

The nine areas above support us as teachers to provide high quality teaching using direct instructions but setting high expectations for all.



Previous learning from the day before is revisited in a TWS lesson.

Oracy forms an integral part to a TWS lesson.

High quality first teaching allows children to see what a good sentence looks like and then replicate it.

The 'Enable' section of the lesson encourages independent practice.

The TWS approach allows children to 'see inside the writers mind' through robust modelling, it holds their 'writers hand' providing a firm scaffold to allow for success.

Initiate, Model, Enable. Each lesson is broken down into 20 minute chunks.

Teacher models each sentence. Sentence stacking display celebrates children's work.

Spelling at St Mary's

At St Mary's, we use The Vocabulary Ninja Whole School Spelling System which contains everything needed to effectively teach, learn, practise and test a given spelling rule, directly linked to the National Curriculum. It is taught from KS2.

Teaching Sequence

Monday	Learn and explore new spellings for the week
Tuesday	Look, Cover, Write and Check activities
Wednesday	Capitals, Colours and Bubble writing activities
Thursday	Small, large and mixed letter writing activities
Friday	Spelling test

Teaching Details

Weekly Spelling Rule –Each week we will introduce a new spelling rule and will give a clear explanation of the rule. The spellings for the test on Friday will be based on that week's spelling rule.

Look, Write, Cover and Check –On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday we will do a range of classic look, cover, write and check spelling activities. These have been provided in many variations to help keep spelling fresh and engaging in the class and at home.

Impact

Pupil outcomes in writing at KS2 are above the national average. Staff are well trained and carry out regular moderation of writing to ensure consistency in assessment across the school, the trust and local area.

Assessment

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, we assess writing in line with our Learning Feedback Policy. This includes some of the following ways:

- Immediate formative assessment which is used to inform next steps planning, such as verbal feedback, live marking or child / peer assessment against steps to success.
- Final independent pieces are assessed against the writing criteria checklist for each year group by the class teacher (see appendix)
- In EYFS, observations are recorded in children's learning journals online (Tapestry) and next steps are identified against our writing criteria checklist.
- SPaG is assessed through the use of Automark and NTS termly assessment

Each year group undergoes rigorous moderation based upon a selection of children's work, and their accompanying assessment checklists. Alongside this each year group participates in No more Marking to triangulate our teacher assessments to ensure accuracy and consistency.

The impact of our writing curriculum is that children become confident and successful learners' who can achieve regardless of their starting points. Assessments show that writing knowledge and skills are developing, and children can apply their skills and knowledge to a range of text types. Children across the school have positive attitudes towards their learning in writing and enjoy writing lessons. Children make progress in writing from their starting points on entry and are closing the gap towards attaining national expectations. They are given opportunities to enable them to achieve the greater depth standard. It is our aim that all cohorts will achieve in line with or above national expectations and that they make good progress.

The impact of our writing curriculum is evidenced through the following outcomes:

- **Improved Writing Standards:** Data shows pupils meeting or exceeding age-related expectations in writing is improving year on year and is above the National average, reflecting our effective teaching methods and support systems.

Key Stage 2										
Subject	Statistic	2018-2019		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		
		School	National	School	National	School	National	Cohort	School	National
Writing	% of pupils achieving the expected standard	-	78%	71% ●	69%	75% ●	71%	62	79% ●	72%
Writing	% of pupils working at greater depth	-	20%	10% ■	13%	15% ●	13%	62	16% ●	~ 12%

- **Pupil Engagement and Motivation:** Pupil surveys indicate high levels of engagement and enjoyment in writing activities. Pupils express a clear understanding of how to be a writer and show a willingness to experiment with different writing styles, as encouraged by the Write Stuff approach.
- **Quality of Writing:** Work samples demonstrate improvement in the quality of writing, with pupils using a broader vocabulary, sophisticated sentence structures, and varied punctuation.
- **Preparedness for Future Learning:** Our pupils leave primary school with a strong foundation in writing that prepares them for the next stage of their education. They demonstrate confidence and competence in written communication, which is reflected in their transition to secondary school.

In conclusion, at St Mary's, our commitment to outstanding writing education is evident in our holistic approach that prioritises intent, sound implementation, and measurable impact. By incorporating the Write Stuff approach, we strive to enhance our practices, ensuring that every child becomes a proficient, enthusiastic, and reflective writer.