FULBOURN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Our Approach to...

Writing

Aims:

- **To develop fluent transcription.** Children will be explicitly taught handwriting and spelling, with regular practice to develop accuracy, fluency and increasing automaticity. This will enable children to record their ideas efficiently and reduce the cognitive demands of transcription.
- **To develop composition.** Children will be taught to generate, articulate and organise ideas, initially through oral composition and increasingly through writing. They will develop their ability to construct effective sentences and texts, selecting appropriate vocabulary, grammar and text structures.
- **To teach children to write for a range of purposes and audiences.** Children will learn to identify the purpose and intended audience for their writing and understand how these influence the content, form, organisation, vocabulary, sentence structures and level of formality they choose. They will apply these choices when writing across a range of genres and contexts.
- **To teach children to plan, draft, edit and publish their writing.** Children will learn to organise their ideas before writing, develop these ideas into a coherent draft, edit their writing for accuracy in spelling, grammar and punctuation, and publish their writing for an intended audience.
- **To establish consistent, evidence-informed writing instruction across the school.** Teachers will use a clear progression of knowledge and skills, provide explicit modelling and guided practice, and identify and address gaps in transcription, sentence construction and composition.

Research base:

- OFSTED research review series: English https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/curriculum-research-review-series-english/curriculum-research-review-series-english
- Department for Education (2025). *The Writing Framework: A common approach to teaching writing in Reception and key stages 1 and 2*.
- Education Endowment Foundation (2021). *Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2*. London: EEF.
- Education Endowment Foundation (2020). *Improving Literacy in Key Stage 1*. London: EEF.
- Sedita, J. (2019). *The Writing Rope: The Strands That Are Woven Into Skilled Writing*. Keys to Literacy.

Our approaches:

Handwriting

Handwriting is a core component of transcription and is taught explicitly from Reception onwards. The aim is for children to develop fluent, legible and increasingly automatic handwriting as early as possible, so that the physical act of writing places minimal demands on their attention and working memory and they can focus on composition.

Handwriting teaching begins in Reception with the development of the physical and motor skills that underpin successful handwriting. This includes opportunities to develop gross and fine motor control, hand strength, dexterity, bilateral coordination and control of tools. Children engage in pre-writing activities that develop the movements needed for writing, including patterns, lines, curves and shapes, alongside explicit teaching of letter formation when children are ready.

The Penpals Handwriting scheme is used to provide a consistent progression and approach across the school. Teachers explicitly model letter and numeral formation, provide guided practice with specific feedback and ensure that children receive regular opportunities to practise and apply their handwriting skills. Teaching progresses from individual letter formation to accurate joins, appropriate spacing, consistent letter size and increasingly fluent handwriting.

The expectation is that handwriting is taught explicitly at least three times a week across the school and that teachers reinforce correct formation, posture, pencil grip and presentation when children write across the curriculum. Where pupils develop inaccurate or inefficient habits, these are identified and addressed through additional modelling, practice and support.

A functional pencil grip enables children to control the pencil efficiently without unnecessary tension or fatigue. Teachers explicitly teach and model an effective grip and provide opportunities for children to develop the fine motor control needed to maintain it.

The dynamic tripod grip is an efficient grip for handwriting, with the pencil controlled primarily by the thumb and first two fingers. Children who experience difficulty developing a functional grip should receive targeted support, including appropriate pencil size and shape, gross and fine motor activities and explicit modelling. Pencil grips or other adaptations should be used where they provide a clear benefit to an individual child, rather than as a universal intervention.

Spelling

Spelling is a core component of transcription and is taught explicitly and systematically from Reception onwards. The aim is for children to develop accurate, increasingly automatic spelling so that they can record their ideas fluently and focus their attention on composition.

The school uses the Spelling Shed scheme to provide a consistent progression in spelling knowledge and practice across the school. The scheme supports the systematic teaching of phonics, spelling patterns, common exception words, morphological knowledge and the conventions of English

spelling. Teachers follow the planned progression while adapting teaching and practice to address the specific needs of their pupils.

Spelling teaching develops more than the ability to memorise individual words. Children are taught to recognise and apply patterns and conventions, understand the relationship between sounds and graphemes, and use knowledge of prefixes, suffixes, roots and word families to spell unfamiliar words. Teachers explicitly model spelling strategies and provide opportunities for pupils to apply new learning in words, sentences and their own writing.

Spelling is taught through regular, explicit instruction and purposeful practice. Lessons include opportunities to:

- revisit previously taught spelling knowledge and identify misconceptions;
- explicitly teach new spelling patterns, rules and conventions;
- model effective strategies for remembering and constructing spellings;
- practise spelling words in a range of contexts;
- develop pupils' knowledge of word families, morphology and etymology where appropriate;
- apply spelling knowledge in sentences and extended writing; and
- provide additional practice and intervention for pupils who have not secured taught spelling knowledge.

Children should be encouraged to apply their spelling knowledge independently when writing and to develop effective strategies for attempting and then checking the spelling of unfamiliar words. Teachers should identify patterns in spelling errors and use these to inform subsequent teaching. Pupils who continue to experience difficulty should receive targeted support that revisits the underlying knowledge or phonological, orthographic or morphological skills required.

Children from Year 2 upwards have a weekly list of spellings to practice both at school and at home. These are quizzed weekly to help children, teachers and their families monitor how effectively they are able to recall these spellings. At the end of each half term, children have a 'Big Spell' quiz which incorporates all of the spellings learned over that period, encouraging them to revisit and recall previous learning.

The overall aim is for children to develop accurate, fluent and increasingly automatic spelling, enabling transcription to become less cognitively demanding and allowing them to devote greater attention to the composition and craft of their writing.

Talk for Writing

For most writing units, we use Talk for Writing (TfW) as a framework for planning and teaching. Developed by Pie Corbett and Julia Strong, TfW supports children to internalise the language, structures and patterns of effective writing through a progression from imitation to innovation, to independent application.

The approach places oral language and rehearsal at the heart of composition. Teachers use high-quality model texts to explicitly teach vocabulary, sentence structures, text organisation and writing

techniques. Children hear, discuss, rehearse and analyse these features before applying them in their own writing. Through shared and guided writing, children are gradually released from the model and supported to make increasingly independent choices as writers.

TfW is therefore used as a teaching framework rather than a formula. Teachers adapt the sequence, level of scaffolding and amount of oral rehearsal according to the purpose of the writing, the knowledge being taught and the needs of the pupils.

The Three I's in Talk for Writing

Talk for Writing is organised around three phases: Imitation, Innovation and Independent Application. The phases provide a progression from teacher modelling and supported rehearsal towards increasingly independent composition. This reflects the 'I do, we do, you do' model of gradual release: teachers initially model and make the processes of writing explicit, pupils then practise and apply new knowledge with increasing levels of guidance, before applying it independently. Teachers adapt the length and emphasis of each phase according to the purpose of the unit, the complexity of the writing and pupils' prior knowledge.

1. Imitation

- In the imitation phase, pupils develop a secure understanding of the content, structure and language of a model text.
- Pupils learn and orally rehearse a model text, using storytelling, actions, maps, visual prompts and other appropriate scaffolds.
- Teachers explicitly draw attention to the text's vocabulary, sentence structures, grammatical features, organisation and writing techniques.
- Pupils explore how the writer has constructed the text and why particular language and structural choices have been made.
- Oral rehearsal provides opportunities for pupils to practise new vocabulary and sentence structures before applying them in writing.
- The aim is for pupils to internalise the language and structure of the model so that they have a secure foundation from which to compose their own writing.

2. Innovation

- In the innovation phase, pupils apply the structures and language of the model while collaboratively innovating the model text.
- Pupils adapt elements of the model, such as characters, settings, events, information, vocabulary or sentence structures, according to the purpose and audience of the writing.
- Teachers model how writers make choices and provide shared and guided writing opportunities before gradually reducing the level of support.
- Pupils orally rehearse their ideas before and during composition, using the model as a scaffold rather than simply reproducing it.

- Teachers explicitly address the writing knowledge pupils need to make successful adaptations, including vocabulary, grammar, sentence construction and text structure.
- The aim is for pupils to move from reproducing a model towards making increasingly independent choices as writers.

3. Independent Application

- In the independent application phase, pupils draw on the knowledge and skills developed throughout the unit to produce their own writing.
- Pupils plan, draft and edit their own piece of writing, making appropriate choices for the intended purpose and audience.
- Pupils apply the vocabulary, sentence structures, text structures and writing techniques that have been explicitly taught.
- Teachers provide appropriate support where needed but expect pupils to demonstrate increasing independence in composition and transcription.
- Completed writing is used to assess pupils' application of taught knowledge and skills and to identify priorities for subsequent teaching.
- The aim is for pupils to transfer what they have learned to a new context and demonstrate that they can compose effectively without simply replicating the original model.

The Importance of High-Quality Model Texts

High-quality model texts are central to the Talk for Writing process. They provide pupils with a clear example of what effective writing looks and sounds like and give teachers a purposeful context in which to explicitly teach vocabulary, sentence construction, text structure and writing craft.

Where possible, model texts should be based on authentic, real-world texts, including high-quality fiction and non-fiction written for genuine audiences and purposes. These texts should be carefully selected and, where necessary, adapted to ensure that they are accessible and appropriately challenging for the pupils. Adaptation should ensure that the language, content and structure provide an achievable model for the intended learning.

Model texts should be deliberately constructed to include the knowledge and skills that pupils are expected to learn and apply. In particular, they should include:

- Aspirational vocabulary ('juicy words') that extends pupils' vocabulary and provides opportunities for explicit teaching, oral rehearsal and application. New vocabulary should be selected because it is useful and relevant to the purpose and content of the writing, rather than included simply to make the text sound sophisticated.
- Sentence structures from the school's sentence progression, ensuring that pupils encounter, rehearse and apply the sentence constructions appropriate to their stage of development.
- Tools from the genre-specific toolkits, showing how the author deliberately selects and uses the conventions, structures and techniques of the particular genre or purpose to achieve an intended effect.

- Clear organisation and text structure, so that pupils can identify how the author sequences, develops and connects ideas across the whole text.
- Deliberate choices for purpose and audience, enabling teachers to explore why the author has selected particular vocabulary, sentence structures, levels of formality and organisational choices, and how these choices influence the reader.

Teachers should read, enjoy, analyse and deconstruct model texts with pupils, drawing attention to the specific features pupils will subsequently be expected to use. Vocabulary and sentence structures should be orally rehearsed before pupils are expected to apply them independently. The model should therefore act as a teaching resource, not simply as an example to imitate.

A strong model text provides a shared language and structure for the unit. During imitation, pupils internalise its key features; during innovation, they manipulate and adapt these features; and during independent application, they draw on the knowledge and tools they have learned to construct their own writing. Model texts should therefore be closely aligned with the intended outcomes of the unit and the wider progression of writing knowledge and skills.

Sentence Progression

The school's **sentence progression** provides a clear sequence for teaching and revisiting increasingly complex sentence structures, grammar and punctuation across Years 1 to 6. It ensures that pupils are systematically exposed to new grammatical concepts and have sufficient opportunities to practise and master them before moving to more demanding structures.

The progression is designed to develop pupils' sentence construction and control, rather than simply their knowledge of grammatical terminology. Teachers explicitly model how sentences are constructed and how grammatical and punctuation choices can be used to communicate meaning and create effects.

As pupils progress through the school, they will:

- encounter an increasingly wide range of sentence structures and grammatical features;
- develop secure understanding of how sentences are constructed and how clauses and phrases work together;
- practise new structures through oral rehearsal, shared writing and guided application before using them independently;
- revisit previously taught structures so that knowledge becomes increasingly secure and automatic;
- learn to manipulate sentence structures and punctuation to control meaning, emphasis, rhythm, pace and impact on the reader; and
- apply sentence-level knowledge across different purposes, audiences and genres.

The sentence progression therefore supports a gradual movement from secure control of simple structures towards deliberate and sophisticated manipulation of grammar and punctuation, enabling pupils to make increasingly independent choices as writers.

Toolkit Progression Guide

The school's **Toolkit Progression Guide** provides a clear progression in the writing tools pupils are taught to recognise, practise and apply across different text types e.g. persuasion, instructions, suspense writing. It identifies the features and techniques that authors use to achieve purposes and effects and establishes expectations for the increasing range and sophistication of tools pupils should control as they move through the school.

The progression is designed to ensure that pupils do not simply learn the features of different genres as a checklist. Instead, they develop an understanding of how and why authors use particular tools and learn to make increasingly deliberate choices in their own writing. Younger pupils are taught a small number of tools explicitly and apply them with significant scaffolding. As their knowledge develops, pupils are able to select from a wider repertoire, combine tools and make increasingly sophisticated choices according to the purpose, audience and intended effect of their writing.

The Toolkit Progression Guide should therefore be used alongside the Sentence Progression. The Sentence Progression establishes the grammatical and punctuation knowledge pupils need, while the Toolkit Progression Guide identifies how authors draw on this knowledge, alongside vocabulary, structure and genre-specific techniques, to craft effective texts.

Short Burst Writing

Short burst writing provides frequent, focused opportunities for pupils to practise and apply newly taught vocabulary, sentence structures, grammatical features and writing tools. It is an important part of developing accuracy, fluency and control before pupils are expected to apply these elements within longer pieces of writing.

Short bursts should have a clear teaching focus and allow pupils to concentrate on one or two specific aspects of writing at a time. They may be used to practise a new sentence structure, apply a 'juicy word', experiment with a writing tool from the genre toolkit, or combine previously taught knowledge in a new context.

Teachers should:

- model the target word, sentence structure or writing tool before pupils apply it;
- provide opportunities for oral rehearsal before writing;
- keep the writing task short and focused so that pupils can concentrate on the intended learning;
- provide immediate feedback and opportunities to edit and improve the application of the target skill;
- revisit previously taught structures and tools regularly to support retention and fluency; and
- gradually reduce scaffolding as pupils develop greater control and independence.

Short burst writing should be used frequently throughout a writing unit, rather than only as a separate activity. It can take place during the imitation, innovation and independent application phases of Talk

for Writing is used to bridge the gap between rehearsing a new skill and applying it in extended composition.

The purpose is not to produce lengthy or polished pieces of writing. Instead, short bursts provide the deliberate practice needed to master the building blocks of composition, so that pupils develop an increasingly secure repertoire of vocabulary, sentence structures and writing tools that they can draw upon independently in longer pieces of writing.

Writing Across Different Text Types

Pupils are taught to write across a broad and carefully sequenced range of text types, ensuring that they develop the knowledge and flexibility to write for different purposes and audiences. The curriculum balances narrative writing with purposeful non-fiction writing and provides repeated opportunities to apply the vocabulary, sentence structures and writing tools taught throughout Years 1 to 6.

Narrative Writing

Each half term, pupils write a narrative piece inspired by high-quality literature. Texts are carefully selected to expose pupils to a rich range of authors, styles, themes, settings and narrative structures, while providing strong models for the writing being taught.

Across their time in school, pupils are systematically exposed to a range of narrative genres and techniques, including:

- traditional tales and fairy tales;
- adventure and action;
- suspense and mystery; and
- historical and realistic fiction.

The purpose is not for pupils to learn narrative genres as fixed formulas. Instead, they develop an increasingly broad repertoire of narrative tools and learn how authors use vocabulary, sentence structure, description, dialogue, characterisation, setting, pacing and text structure to engage and influence the reader.

High-quality literature provides the stimulus and model for each unit, while the Toolkit Progression Guide and Sentence Progression ensure that pupils' knowledge and control develop systematically over time.

Non-Fiction Writing

Alongside narrative, pupils regularly write non-fiction texts for authentic or purposeful contexts. Where possible, writing tasks are linked to real-world purposes and audiences so that pupils understand why the text is being written and can make appropriate choices about its content, structure, vocabulary and level of formality.

Examples may include:

- letters of complaint or persuasion;
- instructions and explanations;
- information texts and reports;
- formal and informal correspondence;
- persuasive texts;
- Recounts, blogs and newspaper reports; and
- presentations and other texts with a genuine communicative purpose.

Non-fiction units explicitly teach the conventions and tools associated with different text types. Pupils learn to identify how authors organise information, select vocabulary, construct sentences and use appropriate levels of formality to communicate effectively with a particular audience.

Across both narrative and non-fiction writing, pupils are expected to transfer and apply their growing knowledge of transcription, sentence construction, vocabulary, text structure and writing craft. The curriculum therefore provides both breadth of experience and a clear progression towards increasing control and independence as writers.

Inclusion by Design

The teaching of writing is designed to be accessible to all pupils from the outset. Teachers anticipate the barriers pupils may encounter and build appropriate scaffolds, models, vocabulary and opportunities for rehearsal into the teaching sequence. These supports are part of high-quality writing instruction and are available to all pupils who need them, while expectations for the quality and ambition of writing remain high.

Modelling

- Explicit modelling is used throughout writing lessons. Teachers model both the writing process and the thinking that sits behind it, making decisions about vocabulary, sentence structure, organisation and writing tools explicit. Think-alouds enable pupils to hear how an experienced writer generates and develops ideas, selects language and responds to the needs of the reader.
- Models provide pupils with a clear reference point that they can return to throughout a lesson. They also create opportunities for shared idea generation, enabling all pupils to contribute ideas and hear a range of possibilities before beginning to write. Teachers model different levels of support where appropriate, ensuring that scaffolding helps pupils to access the task without lowering the intended learning or outcome.

Language

- Language is explicitly taught rather than assumed. Key vocabulary is introduced, discussed, defined and rehearsed before pupils are expected to use it in their writing. Dual-coded vocabulary resources (Widgits) are used to support pupils in developing and retaining new language.

- Pupils have access to vocabulary in a range of forms according to need, including:
    - vocabulary selected specifically for the task;
    - Printed word banks;
    - vocabulary generated and recorded collaboratively;
    - working wall resources; and
    - visual and dual-coded prompts.
- Across the school, Grow the Code charts are available to support pupils with spelling and the application of phonics knowledge, when attempting new and ambitious vocabulary.
- Vocabulary support should extend pupils' language rather than limit their choices. Word banks and other scaffolds should therefore include ambitious vocabulary where appropriate and be gradually reduced as pupils develop greater independence.

Editing

- Editing is taught as a normal and purposeful part of writing, rather than an additional task for pupils who have finished their work. All pupils are encouraged to reread their writing and make changes that improve its accuracy, clarity and effectiveness.
- Teachers explicitly model different levels of editing, from correcting transcriptional errors such as spelling, capital letters and punctuation to making changes to vocabulary, sentence structure, organisation and whole sections of text. Pupils are taught to identify opportunities for improvement and to make changes with increasing independence.
- A positive approach to editing helps pupils to understand that mistakes are part of the writing process and that effective writers make changes to their work. Pupils should feel safe to take risks, identify errors and revise their ideas, with appropriate adult or peer support where required.

High Expectations for All

- Inclusion by design does not mean reducing the ambition of the writing curriculum. All pupils are taught the same essential knowledge and skills, with scaffolding and support adjusted according to need. Teachers consider carefully when a scaffold is necessary, how it enables access to the intended learning and when it can be removed.
- The aim is for pupils to become increasingly independent writers, with classroom routines, resources and teaching approaches designed to remove barriers while maintaining high expectations for vocabulary, sentence construction, composition, transcription and the quality of the finished piece.