



Teaching writing at Queensway School

In writing, we aim to inspire the children to be excited about their writing and achieve their full potential. As a staff we hope to pass on our enthusiasm and help the children to believe that they are valued writers. Children are taught in mixed ability groups, but activities are differentiated to support the children's needs. To celebrate great work, we have writing picture frames in every class where a child's work is displayed, and teachers use the class Blogs to publish children's writing. In addition, children's writing may be selected for a 'Golden Book' award. As part of the writing process, all children at Queensway are encouraged to edit and review their writing. For our youngest children this may be linked to letter formation or phonic application. As children move through the school, editing will be used to develop their understanding of grammar, spelling and composition. Additionally, as appropriate, redrafting will also be expected.

When planning, all teachers use:

- The long-term genre plan
- Texts recommended on the genre plan (although this may be changed in consultation with the writing lead/phase leader)
- Integris
- Queensway Medium term planning and weekly planning document
- Guided reading sessions to support the children's understanding of the genre they are writing and the features
- A range of ways to inspire writing including film, drama, music, pictures and artefacts.
- The marking and assessment policy
- The AFL document.

Foundation Stage

Transcription (spelling and handwriting)

In Foundation Stage the focus of writing initially is giving meaning to marks and then moves on to letter formation and the application of phonics. Opportunities for early mark making and writing is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff respond to each child's emerging needs and interests, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction. Writing is taught in two ways - through literacy and phonics lessons that have a specific focus and through "continuous provision" where children write independently using a variety of media with activities linked to a theme or personal interests. In the Foundation Stage, there is continuous provision for mark making and writing both inside the classroom and in the outside learning area. (e.g. use of writing in role play areas, writing labels for information, free story writing and sand writing).

Composition

Whilst in Foundation stage, children are actively encouraged and taught to articulate their ideas and structure them in speech before writing. Teachers in Nursery and Reception use 'Tales Toolkit' to teach children how to orally create their own stories, including recently introduced vocabulary. In Reception classes, 'Talk For Writing' (developed by Pie Corbett) is also used, children are encouraged to learn the text; they are supported by using visual text maps and actions to help them internalise the text. The children use the text maps, teacher modelled writes and patterns of language that they have learned so that they can attempt to write parts or a whole text independently. Text maps, small world story scenes, puppets and Tales Toolkit story telling bags are available for children to access independently in continuous provision. Staff will actively encourage children to retell or invent their own stories whilst using these resources and will scribe their ideas making time to share and celebrate their stories.

Handwriting

In Nursery, children are encouraged to develop their gross and fine motor skills through activities such as messy play, including sand, paint and malleable materials, developmental movement sessions and yoga. Squiggle while you Wiggle and dough disco sessions forms part of our curriculum, which prepares the whole body to write using music as the inspiration and driver for practicing the rhythms and patterns of handwriting. By the end of Nursery, children who are physically ready are taught to form the letters in their name. Reception children continue to refine their fine motor skills through a range of sensory activities and letter formation is taught daily as part of the daily phonics sessions in a variety of ways including songs and actions.

Year One

Moving into Key Stage one, teachers continue to use the 'Talk For Writing' approach in the teaching of writing. In Year one there is always an innovation stage to the writing process so that the children can work on applying the features with more independence. In addition to this innovation, teachers provide opportunities for using the children's knowledge of a genre and its features through cross-curricular writing. Children are encouraged to apply their phonic knowledge and the grammar teaching.

Year Two

To aid the transition from year one to year two, at the beginning of the year writing is taught in a similar way with text maps, learning of the text, actions and teacher modelled write. From Term Four, the children may not learn a text, but still work from a modelled text. As the year progresses, the modelled write is used less to meet the requirements for the end of Key stage one writing assessments. Children are encouraged to apply their phonic knowledge and the grammar teaching.

Key Stage Two

In years three to six, all teachers use a combination of modelled writing, shared writing and guided writing to support the teaching of writing skills. Writing is often linked to the class topic, but could be linked to science, an author style or a particular text. Children will always be encouraged to discuss the audience and the purpose of the writing. The structure of a module of work would start with text exploration (including work in guided reading), generating ideas (including word banks, grammar features, general features), planning the writing and finally, writing. In year six, from term three, the teacher model will be used less and less to meet the requirements of the end of key stage two writing assessments.

Grammar and spelling

All classes have a lesson of grammar and a lesson of spelling every week, in addition to this there should be a handwriting lesson and, in Key Stage 2, a session where the "wow" words are being taught. Children should have an opportunity to apply spelling patterns and grammar teaching in the week that it is being taught.

The Role of the Writing Leader

The Writing Leader needs to have a passion for writing and champion the area of the curriculum within the school. They need to ensure that they continue to develop their own understanding and expertise, keeping up with any new initiatives. To lead the area and achieve maximum impact, the Writing Leader regularly completes these tasks:

- Book scrutinies
- Planning scrutinies
- Lesson observations
- Moderation of writing at assessment points
- Working alongside staff with focus groups of children
- Supporting staff with planning
- Leading Booster sessions for identified groups of children

- Ensuring that the appropriate support is in place where issues have been identified in progress or attainment
- Delivering CPD to both teachers and TAs in an environment where all staff are valued and feel confident to share their own ideas and experiences
- Liaising with foundation subject leaders to check the quality of cross-curricular writing
- Managing the English budget
- Feeding back to staff from Partnership meetings or CPD they have attended
- Analysing data at the 3 assessment points and any interim assessment points
- Writing reports for the Pupil Outcomes meeting of Governors
- Organising writing Day
- Alerting staff to writing competitions that the children can enter
- Keeping abreast of external assessments and moderation for EYFS, end of Key stage One and end of Key Stage Two
- Sharing and sign posting teachers to high quality resources
- Celebrating children's writing with them