



WRITING POLICY



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What is writing?

At Hollinswood Primary School we love to write!

Good writing gives your child a voice to share their ideas with the world and develop and explore their own personality.

The National Curriculum divides writing into two broad areas: transcription and comprehension. Transcription covers the technical aspects of writing: handwriting, spelling, grammar & punctuation. Composition is about articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing them down.

Learning to write can be a tricky business, because good writing involves balancing all these different parts. There's a lot for a child to juggle.

Subject intent

At Hollinswood Primary School & Nursery, we aim to develop every child's skills, knowledge and attitudes in order for them to become **responsible, resilient, resourceful** and **respectful** learners.

Writing is an essential tool in effective communication. In order for children to develop into articulate, **resilient** and imaginative communicators, they need to be well-equipped with the basic skills to become life-long **resourceful** learners.

At Hollinswood, all children develop a genuine love and **respect** of language and the written word, through using a range of interesting and exciting contexts to motivate and inspire them.

Children develop an understanding of how widely writing is used in everyday life and, therefore, how important and useful the skills are that they are learning. Our intentions in writing are for children to write for a purpose, see themselves as real writers, take ownership and responsibility of their writing, and see writing as an interesting and enjoyable process.

How the curriculum is designed

The writing curriculum has been planned for using the following concepts:

- Transcription (including spelling and handwriting)
- Grammar
- Punctuation
- Composition

Transcription and Composition

Writing comprises two essential components:

- **Transcription:** The physical act of writing, including spelling and handwriting.
- **Composition:** The process of articulating ideas and structuring them, often beginning in speech before being written down.

Effective writing requires pupils to have sufficient working memory capacity to plan, compose, and review their work. This depends on secure transcription skills.[63] Therefore, developing fluent transcription should be a critical focus in the early years and Key Stage 1. By the start of Year 1, many pupils will not yet have the spelling and handwriting skills needed to write everything they can express orally. To bridge this gap, the national curriculum recommends using dictated sentences in Year 1 to practise and apply spelling.

In the earliest stages of writing instruction, it can be effective to teach transcription and composition separately. For example:

- **Composition-focused activities:** Pupils share ideas orally while teachers model how writing records thoughts and feelings. Teachers can demonstrate spelling, punctuation, and word choice to show how writers convey meaning.
- **Transcription-focused activities:** Pupils practise letter formation and write simple sentences dictated by the teacher, reinforcing grapheme–phoneme correspondences (GPCs) for spelling.[64]

This approach allows pupils to concentrate on one skill at a time while gradually integrating both.

EYFS

In Reception, children take part in daily phonics sessions, where they learn transcription skills alongside taught phonemes and graphemes. Fluent transcription skills are a critical focus for the early years and key stage 1.

In Reception, composition and transcription will be taught separately. When focussing on composition, children can convey their ideas orally.

Carefully-planned provision is continuously accessible for pupils in both Nursery and Reception in order for them to develop their Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening skills. These opportunities regularly link to whole class shared stories and themes and topics covered, supporting the development of subject schema. Quality adult-interaction with pupils ensures that the provision is being accessed appropriately and in a way that will provide experiences for them to practise developing core skills and make progress.

Year 1

By the beginning of Year 1, not all pupils will have the spelling and handwriting skills they need to write down everything that they can compose out loud. The national curriculum suggests using dictated sentences in Year 1 to apply and practise spelling. This means:

- Children get the practice they need to acquire fluent transcription skills (spelling and handwriting), which is the foundation for their progress in writing.
- Dictation activities enable pupils to practise and apply their spelling knowledge and segmenting skill to use the content they have been taught and to do so without having their working memories overloaded by composing sentences.

We adopt this approach whilst children in Year 1 are still mastering transcription skills. We believe writing in Year 1 should focus on these areas:

• Oracy First

- Allocate time in all lessons for pupils to compose sentences orally before writing.
- Encourage verbal rehearsal even for pupils who can confidently transcribe.

• Sentence Structure

- Emphasise simple sentence construction based on **subject + verb**.

- Avoid introducing complex clauses or advanced syntax at this stage.

• Writing Process

- Do **not** implement full writing processes (plan, draft, edit, publish) in Year 1.
- Focus exclusively on writing **individual sentences**, not extended genres or text types.
- Editing and revising are **not expected** in Year 1.

• Curriculum Alignment

- Follow the National Curriculum guidance: Year 1 pupils should practise spelling and handwriting through dictated sentences.
- Composition should primarily occur orally, with teachers modelling how spoken ideas become written text.

Once children have become more confident with this, they are then taught the knowledge needed for writing through the learning journey outlined below.

Year 2 and KS2

In Year 2 and KS2, we develop writing through four purposes. These are:

- writing to entertain
- writing to inform
- writing to persuade
- writing to discuss



In these phases, teaching and learning activities will follow the same approximate structure over each writing unit. This writing journey will take place over a number of lessons.

1. **Diagnostic assessment.** This provides an opportunity for teachers to assess what the children know and what needs to be focussed on. This assessment will either be written, a concept task (eg role play) or a discussion task.
2. **Time to explore the genre.** This will include a discussion about the Purpose (to Persuade, Inform, Entertain, Discuss), Audience and Text Type (features of the genre) and how these elements affect the writing choices that the author makes.
3. **Text deconstruction.** Children will be given a WAGOLL (What A Good One Looks Like) which they can emulate. Children will be supported in 'deconstructing' the text so that they have a clear understanding of the elements required to write successfully in this genre.

4. **An engaging stimulus or a memorable experience for writing.** Writing activities are planned which will have a 'real' audience which will increase children's motivation to write. These are linked to whole class texts, the wider curriculum and trips, visits and visitors.
5. **Conceptualised construction.** Children have an opportunity to independently write, using the knowledge they have learnt throughout the writing journey. Children may write in chunks. The cognitive load involved in writing can be overwhelming for children as they have to consider many different elements at the same time therefore children may complete writing activities in 'chunks' over the course of multiple lessons.
6. **Editing and improving.** Children will read through their work and using feedback from the class teacher/teaching assistant or their peers, they will make improvements to it.
7. **Independent Writing Task:** At the end of the unit, children are asked to complete a different writing task in the same genre. This allows the teacher to assess their work and the progress they have made in that unit.

Vocabulary

The use of genres specific vocabulary is taught within each new unit of writing to encourage children to 'magpie' and include this within their own work. Children are encouraged to transfer vocabulary across different pieces of writing to increase their language bank. Children look at synonyms and are given the opportunity to practice using the new vocabulary in a variety of contexts.

Writing across the curriculum

Extended writing opportunities are regularly planned for across the curriculum. This encourages the children to be creative and flexible with their writing skills, applying what has previously been taught; e.g. writing a narrative set in Ancient Egypt or writing an explanation of how a volcano erupts.

Handwriting

The ability for children to write legibly is essential in order for them to demonstrate their true potential throughout their school careers (and their lives beyond school) as well as ensuring that they have the ability to communicate effectively using their writing. Nelson handwriting encourages development of an individual style in each child through carefully structured stages and fully covers the technical aspects of writing: letter formation, basic joins, printing, speed writing and slant. Nelson handwriting progresses from pre-writing patterns through to the development of an individual style.

Spelling

The National Curriculum divides writing into two broad areas: transcription and comprehension. Transcription covers the technical aspects of writing: handwriting, spelling, grammar & punctuation.

Ready Steady Spell is a progressive systematic spelling programme from Year 2 up to Year 6. It covers all National Curriculum expectations progressively for all these year groups. It provides full coverage, in a cyclical way, by providing opportunities to reinforce and embed learning systematically and interactively.