



Writing at Thornton Primary School

Intent

At Thornton Primary School we believe that a quality English curriculum should develop children's love of writing and discussion. We aim to inspire an appreciation of our rich and varied literary heritage and a habit of reading widely and often.

We believe that all pupils should be able to confidently communicate their knowledge, ideas and emotions through their writing. We want pupils to acquire a wide vocabulary, a solid understanding of grammar and be able to spell new words by effectively applying the spelling patterns and rules they learn throughout their time in primary school. We aim to develop the children to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.

We believe that all good writers refine and edit their writing, so we want children to develop the independence to identify their own areas for improvement in all writing, editing their work effectively throughout the writing process. Children need to develop a secure knowledge-base in English, which follows a clear pathway of progression as they advance through the primary curriculum. We believe that a secure basis in literacy skills is crucial to a high quality education and will give our children the tools they need to participate fully as a member of society.

At Thornton, our teaching is based on the National Curriculum for English its aims being to ensure all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Throughout their time at Thornton Primary School, children develop their skills by exploring a range of different genres, with a focus on exploring a range of models of excellence and using these to guide the drafting and editing process. It is important to note that we not only develop a real enjoyment of writing in English lessons but in all subjects across the curriculum. We expect the highest standards of writing every time a child writes in any subject.

Progression in the children's writing skills

- Over time, children learn how to work within, and contribute to, a community of writers.
- As their knowledge surrounding the purposes of writing increases, so does their skill in combining, manipulating and subverting them.
- Children become more self-regulating and adaptable in their use of the different writing processes, including how they plan, draft, revise, edit, publish and perform the writing intentions.
- Children are able to apply author's techniques and become skilful appropriate applicators.
- Children's ability and skill to proof read, use a dictionary, and use other spell checking devices increases over time resulting in fewer errors in their final drafts.
- Children's ability to use a thesaurus skilfully increases which in turn broadens their vocabulary.

Preparing children for life after school and tackling social disadvantage

- Children learn about the different ways in which we are moved to write and by developing as writers, they can fully engage with society in a variety of ways.
- They learn how to share their knowledge, opinion, imaginative creativity and artistry. They also learn how to influence and to be persuasive using their own thoughts.
- By developing independent writers, we ensure children can discuss, debate, independently research and explore their own ideas, develop their own writing projects and have an independent response, through writing, to material and subjects taught. They are also able to entertain a variety of audiences through stories and personal anecdote.
- Children are keen and able to write in personal response to what they are reading.
- We decrease the risk of school failure which results from a pupil's inability to share their knowledge and to 'write to learn'.
- We appreciate that business leaders, the job market and academic disciplines require strong writers and so we develop them.

Cultural Capital

- We believe that, by teaching children to become life-long independent motivated writers, we are providing them with the ability to turn their thoughts, knowledge, opinions and artistry into powerful writing.
- Within the community of writers, children have the opportunity to learn from others' cultural capital.
- We teach children how writing is a powerful tool for understanding new knowledge, reorganising it and having a personal response to it.

Implementation

Early writing is taught through early mark making, then when the children begin Letters and Sounds phonics, they are taught the correct letter formations. This begins with writing (whether with a writing tool or in the air) CVC words, moving onto short sentences using the sounds they have been taught. EYFS children are encouraged to write independently during continuous provision. We use the same phonics program across the school providing continuity and a vehicle for guaranteed progression. Phonics sessions take place four times a week for 25 minutes and daily in Reception. Pupils are taught in ability groups in Key Stage One thus enabling them to be taught according to their reading level not their age. Teaching is very precise and tailored to the needs of each child irrespective of year group.

We teach writing as whole class lessons, so that all children have access to the age-related skills and knowledge contained in the National Curriculum. We use strategies from The Write Stuff throughout the school (Years 1-6) which involve the use of a thinking side for developing ideas and vocabulary and a writing side to apply the vocabulary and knowledge gained during the thinking side. The writing process is modelled through carefully selected units of work and engaging cross-curricular topics.

The structure of an English lesson:

Each sentence stacking lesson consists of three learning chunks which take approximately 20 minutes each. Each learning chunk consists of three parts: initiate, model, enable. The initiate part of the lesson is used to gather ideas and vocabulary that the children scribe onto their thinking sides. Ideas are generated in a variety of ways such as: teacher-led, partner talk, or whole class 'kind calling out'. The model chunk is a chance for the teacher to model a sentence for that learning chunk as the writer, showing the children how to apply the vocabulary they have just gathered. And finally, the enable chunk is where the children have the chance to produce their independent sentence putting the vocabulary into context.

Our editing progress takes a structured approach where the teacher marking highlights errors in three areas: E1, E2 and E3. E1 includes spelling, punctuation, adding missing words or taking away any extra words. E2 signals when a sentence needs re-writing and E3 indicates where extra information needs to be added. Each child has a note at the end of their writing indicating the errors to look for, allowing for more focused editing sessions.

Development and exposure to new vocabulary takes high priority throughout the school, the quality of word knowledge being crucial for reading comprehension and developing children's writing. This is started in Reception with the formation of a 'Wow Word Wall' as new vocabulary is introduced through children's learning. Vocabulary is developed through exposure to Tier 1 (common exception words, homophones, high frequency vocabulary), Tier 2 (academic language) and Tier 3 (topic and domain specific words), Tier 2 and 3 words requiring explicit teaching as these words are harder to decipher when reading text. A range of engaging activities are used to develop children's word knowledge. In years 1 -6, subject specific tier 3 words are displayed on topic walls through different subject areas. Spelling sessions are also used to explore and develop vocabulary and how words relate to each other.

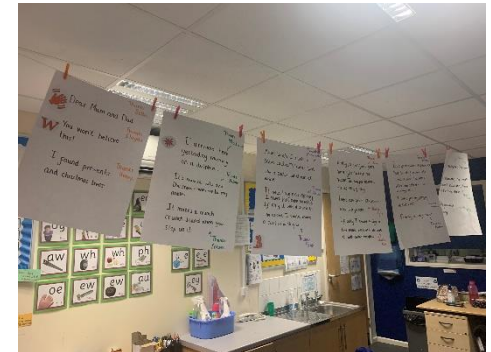
Vocabulary experienced through English lessons is developed through displaying on vocabulary walls in classrooms and references made to word classes where relevant. Children are encouraged to use and adapt these lists into their writing.

To develop a sense of achievement and promote pride in the children's work, there are two opportunities for children's work to be displayed within the classroom: a vocabulary walls where words are chosen to be displayed, and a "sentence stacking" display allowing sentences to be chosen from pupils and displayed hence creating a large class model text, and recognising the author of the sentence.

Spellings:

At Thornton, spelling is taught weekly in focused sessions within each class. Learning to recognise the high frequency words on sight is crucial in developing fluency and accuracy in reading and then writing. High frequency words are the words that appear most often in printed materials. Some of the high frequency words are referred to as 'tricky words', as the children are unable to use their phonic knowledge to decode every part of the word.

Once children are confident in reading and spelling high frequency words, they are taught spelling rules and are encouraged to apply these rules in their writing. Class teachers use a National Curriculum aligned spelling scheme to support with the teaching of



the different spelling rules and this can then often be used as homework for children when applicable. Spellings are sent home in each year group as part of the children's homework; the pupils are then tested on these words in their weekly spelling tests.

Grammar and Punctuation:

Grammar and punctuation knowledge and skills are taught through English writing lessons and also as stand-alone sessions. Teachers plan to teach the required skills through the genres of writing that they are teaching, linking it to the genre to make it more connected with the intended writing outcome. Teachers sometimes focus on particular grammar and punctuation skills as stand-alone lessons, if they feel that the class need additional lessons to embed and develop their understanding or to consolidate skills.

Presentation:

Handwriting is not only taught discretely in Reception to Year 4; it is an integral part to any lesson and is reinforced daily. Children are expected to use joined, legible handwriting by the end of Key Stage Two and work towards achieving their pen licence, where they can then write in a handwriting pen.

Impact on children's personal development

- We ensure children leave our school with a craft which can help promote positive well-being and self-esteem.
- As children learn to develop their own writing process, they develop their unique writer identity. This gives them confidence and knowledge of themselves as writers.
- Our writing is purposeful and involves a future audience which motivates children for wanting to do well in their writing.
- The Write Stuff approach builds a community of writers, who learn how to reflect wisely, behave with integrity and co-operate with their fellow writers.
- Children are encouraged to use their knowledge, opinions, thoughts and own imaginings in their writing, which gives them the ability to reflect and to represent their thoughts and ideas creatively.
- As the children develop as writers, they are given more control over the writing process, teaching them a sense of responsibility.
- They learn the ability to see things differently, and the enjoyment of playing and having fun with words.



Supporting SEND children as developing writers

Children with SEND are supported in the following ways:

- They start with a simplified writing process of planning, drafting and publishing.
- They are provided with word banks of vocabulary and have the opportunity to develop these with their own ideas.
- They are encouraged to plan using storytelling, drawing and talk.
- Over time, they are moved towards a more formal structure for planning, revising and basic editing.
- They write alongside an adult who models writing.
- They have a range of resources to support writing (sound mats, talking tens, counters to represent words etc).
- They are provided with writing frames to support the structure and organisation of their writing.
- Kind Calling Out- offers the children opportunity to share vocabulary and ideas to use in their own writing.

Supporting advanced and highly experienced writers

Advanced writers are supported in the following ways:

- They are encouraged to write and learn from one another.
- Regular opportunities to 'deepen the moment' within English lessons through application of previously taught concepts.
- They are encouraged to collect words, sentences and other writing devices which they can apply to their writing.
- Read for pleasure a wide variety of texts including those which present a challenge.
- Adopt advanced writerly techniques across the curriculum.

Ensuring key knowledge and skills about being a writer become part of children's long term memory

Our commitment to a reassuringly consistent writing approach means children repeatedly practise the craft of writing, are repeatedly moved to write in a variety of genres, and because the genres are repeated and built upon throughout the school, children begin to place this knowledge into their long-term memory. Children become experts in the writing processes as they move through the school. The repetition of the writing processes and the self-regulated writing strategies enables children to undertake their writing efficiently, effectively, and mostly independently.

Genre coverage topic map

	EYFS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Fiction							
Writing to Entertain (Narrative and Description)							
Traditional Tales/ Fairy Stories							
Fables							
Myths and Legends							
Adventure							
Fantasy							
Suspense/horror/mystery							
Historical Setting							
Science Fiction							
Other story genre:							
Non- Fiction							
Writing to Inform							
Recount- including diary and journal							
Instruction							
Explanation							
Reports							
Biography							

Writing to Persuade							
Letter							
Holiday Brochure							
Speech							
Writing to Discuss							
Newspaper							
Argument							

The topic map is adapted to suit the class structure at Thornton, and where classes are mixed we ensure differentiation is effective across the year groups. Careful consideration of genres ensures all genres are covered before the children leave Thornton Primary School.

Impact:

We measure the effectiveness and impact of our English Writing, Grammar and Spelling curriculum in a variety of different ways. We use National and summative testing to assess pupils' outcomes for Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling as part of the Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs for Year 6 pupils) and through termly summative assessments across school which enables pupils' progress and attainment in the subject to be evaluated. The impact of the curriculum can be seen through pupils' national assessment results.

Through lesson and pupils' book monitoring, it is evident that pupils are being well supported to acquire the necessary skills and subject knowledge in order to become established and confident writers and work monitored in books demonstrates that the curriculum is taught at an age-appropriate standard across each year group, with additional opportunities planned for pupils to demonstrate their ability to work at a higher standard. Lesson observations demonstrate that learning is being broken down into appropriate learning chunks and modelling supports pupils in the writing process – ensuring that the subject as a whole is regularly being reviewed to ensure learning is being embedded into pupils' long term memory. Pupil voice indicates that the children are enjoying their learning and can talk about the subject and curriculum opportunities.

More formal records for each pupil will consist of:

- Teachers carry out ongoing teacher assessment. This is recorded on OTrack termly.
- We moderate pupils' work, as a whole staff, at least termly. Levels are agreed between professionals. We seek to moderate with other schools throughout the year.
- Work is assessed via marking and improvements encouraged through highlighting.
- Spelling Tests are carried out weekly. Children's spellings are based on the National Curriculum year group lists.
- Optional SATS are carried out each May in Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils on the SEN Provision Map are identified and monitored. Progress towards targets in school support plans is analysed by teachers and the SEND Coordinator