

WRITING POLICY

DATE PALM STATEMENT of INTENT

At Date Palm our vision is for the School to ensure our pupils grow like a Date Palm tree – with **strong foundations, lofty branches and produce fresh fruit**:

- ✓ To build **Strong Foundations for Character Development** that:
Instil values; inspire each pupil; display best manners.
- ✓ To have **Lofty Branches of Educational Excellence** that will:
Provide a broad and varied range of experiences and learning opportunities;
help each pupil progress and develop in all aspects; support their skills and talents.
- ✓ To produce **Fresh Fruit that provides services to their Communities** in order to:
Become responsible and confident citizens; make a positive difference;
commit to charitable endeavours; become effective contributors towards Britain’s future.

Reviewed by	Position	Signature
Luthfa Begum	Literacy Coordinator	
Sultana Shahid	External Governor	

Reviewed: September 2023
Next review date: September 2025

The Teaching and Learning of Writing Policy

Intent

At Date Palm Primary School, we believe that developing children's writing skills is essential for progressing across the curriculum and preparing children for adult life. We aim to ensure that all children reach their potential, through the delivery of a carefully-planned, stimulating and creative writing curriculum. We believe the development of writing skills is cumulative and children are therefore given the opportunity to build, develop and establish their writing skills throughout their time here.

By the end of Year Six we intend our children to have developed a love of writing and will be able to express their thoughts and ideas clearly and creatively through the written word. We also intend to create writers who can re-read, edit and improve their own writing, and enable pupils to confidently use the essential skills of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Research Link

School adheres to the statutory content of the National Curriculum to ensure all children have access to appropriate age related knowledge and skills.

Education Endowment Fund research indicates that all pupils benefit from oral language interventions, and some studies show slightly larger effects for younger children and pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds (up to six months' additional progress).

The concepts of social constructivist theories, such as the effective use of ZPD and language will be incorporated in developing writing at Date Palm. Vygotsky strongly believed that children learn and acquire higher cognitive development through language, which is the most significant psychological tool in development and learning, (Hewitt, 2012). He further connected speech and writing, and described writing as a form of speech, and distinguished three important points that leads children to writing, this includes the development of gestures, play and drawing, (Vygotsky, 1978). Mallet (2013) in the study of exploring the impact of talk for writing in a year four class with 30 children, including nine children with SEN and low literacy ability. The study found that after the 'talk for writing' intervention, pupils writing skills improved, with one child identified with low writing ability improving by two sub levels.

As well as adopting a social constructivist approach we also understand the benefit of adopting a Behaviourist approach for direct teacher instruction; modelling of skills and techniques; demonstration of writing through shared and guided writing.

Implementation

Our school provides daily English lessons that are progressive and support skill development.

Pupils are given a range of writing opportunities including the use of paired, group and independent writing tasks. This is developed across Key Stages, so that the pupils learn to respond appropriately and supportively to each other.

Aims

The aims of our Writing Policy are:

- To enable pupils to know more, remember more and understand more and use their writing skills as a means of demonstrating this;
- To promote a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards writing;
- To create an interest in words and their meanings in order to broaden vocabulary;
- To create confident, independent writers and spellers;
- To provide the chance for every child to become a writer;
- To create writers who can re-read, edit and improve their own writing;
- To create writers with a legible, joined and fluent handwriting style;
- To prepare pupils for the next stages of their education;
- To provide regular opportunities for pupils to write for a range of purposes and audiences;
- To develop a broad range of writing skills that can be applied to a wide range of text types and genres across the whole curriculum;

Early Years

The Nursery and Reception classes follow the curriculum as outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document

We encourage the children to write independently from an early age. To support development of writing, children progress through the Development Matters document which outlines the ages and stages of progression for the EYFS curriculum. Each classroom has a well organised writing area that over the year includes a variety of different resources for mark making and writing such as large sheets of paper, coloured paper, notebooks, diaries, postcards, clipboards, whiteboards, pens, pencils, high-frequency word cards,

alphabet cards, interactive displays, messages and examples of children's writing. Activities are planned daily to develop children's fine and gross motor skills e.g. building wrist strength by twirling ribbon sticks, practising writing patterns with big brushes and water, making letters in the sand etc.

In Upper Foundation Stage, Literacy will take a more practical approach to improving children's awareness of Literacy. Elements of the Literacy sessions will be evident during planning, teaching and learning such as Shared Writing and Read Write inc storybook Writing. The implementation of the Literacy lessons in Upper Foundation Stage is gradual throughout the year. Children will develop skills and concepts in Literacy through various adult and child-initiated activities in the autumn term, moving towards a more formal Literacy session by the end of the year, to ensure the children are ready to access literacy sessions in Year 1.

Key Stage One / Two:

Pupils in Key Stages One and Two benefit from a daily Literacy lesson. These lessons will be based upon Units of work (one of the non-fiction genres, poetry or a fiction unit based upon a class book). They will cover areas across the English National Curriculum, including writing. Non-Fiction Units, will include writing such as instruction text, information text, biography and report writing. Within fiction units, writing tasks may be more frequent with long composition tasks within a unit and short poetry composition lessons towards the end. Each class also will cover different genre so that children have a range of exciting writing opportunities.

Writing Planning

In terms of planning, teachers will plan units of work based around a class book or using texts from the Hamilton's scheme of work. Units may be one week long or over several weeks. Teachers may plan the whole unit in one block initially but will amend the plan on a weekly basis, taking into account the learning from recent lessons in order to ensure pupils make the best possible progress.

After undertaking an Action Research at Date Palm Primary School to identify the weakness in writing and to improve the writing standards. The research highlights Vygotskian and social constructivist view, that language and speech play a significant role in the development of writing, Vygotsky (1972). Therefore, using this approach, Date Palm has implement Talk for Writing. Therefore, teachers will continue to use the Hamilton's scheme of work, however, will incorporate the imitation, innovation and implementation stage as well as focused, shared and guided writing working towards the final writing piece.

When planning other curriculum areas, teachers will ensure that pupils are given the opportunities to apply their writing skills regularly throughout the term to help them know

more, remember more and understand more.

'Hot' and 'Cold' tasks are being implemented to support the assessment and target setting process, within English for teachers at Date Palm Primary School. This idea is being adapted from 'Talk 4 Writing' and will allow children real clarity over seeing progression with their own writing. This process will take place once each half term.

All teachers:

- complete a long-term overview to map out Literacy Unit coverage for the year;
- complete a medium-term plan that maps out the sequence of individual lessons;
- complete Talk for Writing story map and resources and differentiation.

Read Write Inc – Get Writing

Our pupils learn to read and write effectively and quickly using the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme.

Using the storybooks, we link writing activities. We encourage them to compose each sentence aloud until they are confident to write independently through 'Hold a Sentence, 'Build a Sentence'. We use the final part of the writing day (e.g. Day 3 or 5 of the timetable) to write a composition based on the storybook. Through this, we teach children vital writing components and strategies, such as connecting ideas with personal experience, model writing sentence and paragraph, introduce and model using new vocabulary in writing, proof reading grammar and spelling.

Handwriting

Handwriting is taught in EYFS and on a weekly basis in Years 3 to 6 in a stand-alone lesson with a clear focus on a particular letter, join or another aspect of handwriting that the pupils need to focus on. Teachers will use the Pen Pal teachers book to teach units of work for handwriting. In Years 5 and 6, pupils will be constantly encouraged and expected to use a joined handwriting style. Pens will be given to pupils to use when the teacher feels that they are forming letters correctly and joining fluently and consistently in all writing. When pupils are unable to join handwriting consistently, intervention may be used to help address and improve this. At date Palm

Within Literacy lessons with a writing focus, pupils will be taught writing with a clear focus on Shared Writing as the main teaching strategy. Teachers will demonstrate, scribe and

support writing in order to support pupils at different levels and different stages of writing.

Children in Year 1 and year 2 have regular 5 to 10 minutes handwriting as part of Read Write Inc phonics lessons. We use mnemonics – memory pictures – to help children visualise the letter or join before they write it down. Children are taught handwriting in three stages.

Stage 1

These lessons are taught while children read the Red, Green, Purple, Pink and Orange Storybooks.

Stage 1a: Children practise correct letter formation using family groups

Stage 1b: Children learn where to place the letters on the writing line.

Stage 2

These lessons are taught while children read the Yellow, Blue and Grey Storybooks. Children learn a mature style of writing that will lead to joined-up writing.

Stage 3

These lessons are also taught while children read the Yellow, Blue and Grey Storybooks. Children learn the two basic joins: the arm join (diagonal) and the washing line join (horizontal) and the two variables for each join.

Handwriting assessment and monitoring is checked using the S factor and P checks from the Handwriting Association.

Spellings

EYFS – In Foundation Stage, children will only begin to learn to spell the sight words once they have proved to the teacher that they are able to read them and are ready.

Y1-Y6 - Date Palm follow a spelling scheme of work linked to the national curriculum objectives and students are taught the rules of the spellings as well as weekly spelling tests, which are monitored for progression and intervention. Year 1 and 2 use the Red Rhythms and Fred Fingers to spell red words and green words correctly.

Language, Speaking and Listening:

School recognises the importance that Speaking and Listening has on Writing.

We have tried to create a language rich environment which we believe is essential to the successful acquisition across the curriculum. The development of speech and language is identified as one of the most important parts of our school's early years curriculum. A Speech and Language Therapist is employed by school to train teachers and Nursery Practitioners to match oral language activities to learners' current stage of development, so

that it extends their learning and connects with the rest of the curriculum. Speech and Language activities are used through the use of Blank levels, Language for thinking, language modelling and vocabulary development, colourful semantics which is delivered through twice weekly whole class speech and language session.

Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to use and develop their Speaking and Listening skills to help them with the writing process across all areas of the curriculum. In order for children to become competent writers, children have to learn the language patterns, by hearing it, saying it and exploring. With this in mind, we have adopted some of the strategies encouraged by Pie Corbett in his Talk for Writing approach. Teachers use the approaches they deem appropriate for the lessons they are teaching and the pupils in the lessons. Therefore, 'Story Map' 'Boxing Up' and 'Magpieing' may be evident in lessons throughout school. Constant experience of texts, both orally and in written form, help children internalise language patterns and use drama and hot-seating to help pupils to think about another point of view.

Homework: Foundation Stage:

The main homework in Upper Foundation Stage is graphemes to learn, words to read (Word box), to write own name and digraphs / trigraphs to practise and learn.

Key Stage One / Two:

We believe that well planned, purposeful homework tasks can consolidate, support and extend pupils' learning. Therefore, teachers will set homework regularly, linked to current areas of learning within their classroom, usually with a comprehension, writing and grammar task. Homework will be differentiated where necessary and all pupils will be expected to complete their homework and return it to school within the time limits specified.

Inclusion:

We aim to provide opportunities for all pupils to reach their potential in Writing, no matter what their starting points. Pupils who are underachieving will be identified and strategies put in place in order to help them improve their attainment. Where necessary, teachers will use interventions to help pupils improve their attainment. Intervention time during Arabic is allocated for this.

We recognise the importance to ensure that children with identified Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities have access to an ambitious Writing curriculum. Within the curriculum area of Writing, SEND children will be provided with reasonable adjustments and resources through their tasks and level of challenge provided.

Exemptions for handwriting difficulties

Teachers can use their discretion to ensure that, on occasion, a **particular weakness** does not prevent an accurate judgement being made of a pupil's attainment overall. This can be implemented for children with a handwriting difficulty who are secure in all other aspects of writing.

Impact

Children will make at least good progress in writing, from their last point of statutory assessment or from their starting point. Children will use their speaking and listening, grammar and punctuation skills, writing and reading skills as a key tool in helping them to learn, and as a result, know more, remember more and understand more.

Impact of progression will be monitored through formative and summative assessments.

- EYFS – termly tracking of Early Years development and Every Child is a talker
- Year 1-6 children will have termly writing assessment in which teachers will use writing tracker to monitor writing progress.

Subject Leader Role / Monitoring and Review / Responsibilities

The English Subject leader is Luthfa Begum. The English Subject Leader is responsible for raising standards of teaching and learning in Writing. They will analyse data each year to pick out strengths and identify areas for improvement. From this analysis, the Reading and Writing School Development Plans will be born with a key issue to be driven through school. This Key Issue will be implemented, monitored and the impact evaluated at regular points using some of the following monitoring strategies:

- Auditing staff, in order to plan CPD opportunities;
- Scrutinising pupil work;
- Moderation of pupil work;
- Monitoring Literacy planning;
- Lesson observations;
- Learning Walks;
- Discussion with pupils;
- Keeping up to date with important Literacy developments;