



# Neville's Cross Primary School & Nursery

## Writing Policy

Date of policy: January 2023

Review date: January 2025

*'Neville's Cross is an inclusive family where all are nurtured to become creative, confident and resilient learners supported to reach their unique potential. Our children develop skills to become active and respectful members of our school, community and society and during their time at Neville's Cross, make memories to cherish.'*

At Neville's Cross, we strive to help our children develop into articulate and imaginative communicators, who are well-equipped with the written skills that they need to become life-long learners. We teach the English Writing National Curriculum, ensuring that the learning of writing is built on year by year, and sequenced appropriately to maximise learning for all children. It is our aim that every child has written work of which they are proud: which can be seen; be valued and appreciated; and written with a defined audience and clear purpose. We strive for our children to see themselves - and be seen by others - as real writers.

### To develop our pupils as writers, this is what we do:

- Teach them to write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, in a variety of forms
- Encourage them to write with interest, commitment and enjoyment.
- Show them how to evaluate and edit in order to improve their own writing and that of others.
- Show them how to use vocabulary and punctuation to make meaning clear to their reader.
- Give them the knowledge and the strategies to become confident and accurate spellers.
- Teach them a fluent and legible style of handwriting, promoting an understanding of how to present work appropriately.

### Approaches to writing at Neville's Cross

Our approach to teaching writing covers the 'transcription' and 'composition' requirements of The National Curriculum (2014) teaching them 'hand in hand' to create purposeful learning and making explicit to our children how, where and why their English learning 'fits in.'

#### Writing transcription

##### Punctuation and grammar

- Writing transcription is taught in line with the requirements for Spelling, Punctuation, Grammar and Handwriting of The National Curriculum (2014). Our expectations in our long-term planning documents are age-appropriate for each strand and include the terminology (from the NC glossary) which must be used by each year group.
- Staff consider the purposes for writing when planning their teaching of transcription and ensure that well-matched age-appropriate punctuation and grammar lessons fit with the intended outcome. These transcription 'skill' lessons are linked to the class text providing context and buzz which may be through the use of high-quality written texts, digital literacy E.g. video or animation, or music.
- Transcription skills are documented in children's English books in the form of a 'learning journey' which lasts 2-3 weeks encompassing several different genre. 'These will be genre that children have previously practised and had prior teaching of. It makes explicit to children the purpose behind their learning and where 'it fits in'
- The teaching of this programme is flexible and class teachers apply their own creativity to cover the objectives stated in the National Curriculum.
- In Nursery and Reception, children are introduced to the basic principles of grammar and punctuation appropriate for their age range. They learn through a wide range of activities : singing rhymes, conversations with adults, stories, interactive educational programmes, phonics, reading and writing.

##### Spelling

- To be able to spell correctly is an essential life skill. When spelling becomes automatic, pupils are able to concentrate on the content of their writing and the making of meaning. Whilst we note that spelling is not the most important aspect of writing, confidence in

spelling can have a profound effect on the writer's creativity. We aim to use explicit, interactive teaching which draws children's attention to the origins, structure and meaning of words. As a school, we plan our Spelling Long Term plan to match the progression in our writing assessment, using the Durham LA Assessment without Levels grids, whilst drawing upon the published 'Spelling Shed' programme to support teaching and learning activities. (See Spelling Policy and progression documents for further detail).

### Handwriting

- On entry, our Foundation Stage children are involved in varied activities to develop essential prewriting skills in line with the Early Learning Goals; there is much focus on developing gross and fine motor skills and strengthening muscles in the arms and fingers: daily 'Squiggle Time' and regular 'Dough Disco' sessions alongside a variety of other activities to increase muscle strength and develop fine motor skills, e.g. threading, peg boards, tweezers, snipping with scissors, manipulating pegs, and using fastenings such as buttons, zips and laces. Children are encouraged to mark-make using a variety of writing implements, e.g. pens, pencils, crayons, glitter pens, gel pens, Biro's, chalks etc. When children are introduced to the individual letters and the sounds they make, they are rigorously taught the correct handwriting formation, from the very beginning of their time in school. The use of the mnemonics and ditties for letter formation as outlined in our Phonics SSP (Essential Letters and Sounds) are used consistently across EYFS and beyond as a hook to support pupils' emerging letter formation skills. From the time that children are ready, they are taught to sit with a good posture and are taught to hold a pencil with the correct grip. In the Spring and Summer term of Reception, pupils begin to access the workbooks from the Penpals scheme, whilst maintaining the mnemonics and ditties from our Phonics teaching.
- At Neville's Cross Primary School, we teach handwriting from Year 1 to Year 6. Class teachers follow the Penpals scheme, using the ELS mnemonics to support formation as needed. As children progress through school, there is an increasing focus on fluency, consistency and speed. In Years 1 – 3, every child starts with a pencil each September until they can demonstrate good handwriting skills. Pen licenses are only issued when the Headteacher has seen consistently good handwriting in line with year group expectations maintained for at least two weeks. All children in Years 4, 5 and 6 work in pen.

### Writing Composition

- The 'four purposes of writing' underpin our approach to the teaching of 'composition'. At Neville's Cross, we have a clear 'Progression of Purpose.' Genre are controlled within each purpose, with previously taught genre forming the basis of some lessons to which children effectively apply their transcription skills. High quality texts, videos, images or music are used as hooks.
  - EYFS focus on writing to inform beginning with how to write their name and simple sentences*
  - Key Stage 1 build on their early writing skills and progress to writing to entertain and inform*
  - Writing to persuade is introduced in Lower Key Stage 2*
  - Writing to discuss is introduced in Upper Key Stage 2.*
- New genre are identified on our subject Road Map in line with the four purposes. WAGOLLS ('What a Good One Looks Like') are used (often with links to other curriculum areas) and careful study of these gives our writers a deeper understanding of structure and purpose and an awareness of key features. Once a genre has been introduced, it can be revisited in any subsequent year group. As we follow a two-year cycle at Neville's Cross, different genre are

introduced in different cycles. Teachers may well plan writing opportunities which incorporate genres before they have been taught through a WAGOLL for a particular creative writing purpose, e.g. letters or diaries in KS1, however it would not be expected that all features of the genre would be evident in these writes.

- Further detail about the progression within each purpose is evident in our subject Road Map and progression documents. E.g. How narrative to entertain progresses from 3 part stories in KS1 to stories with Flashbacks, or with different narrators in UKS2. By the end of KS2, our aim for our most able writers, is to choose a suitable writing form once their audience and purpose have been identified.

### Writing Lessons

- Writing lessons begin with adult *modelling* making explicit links to VGP skills in learning journey focussing in on specific concepts and modelling (and expecting) the use of technical vocabulary.
- The adult controls the writing experience: verbalising the direction of their writing; orally rehearsing sentences (and other features) before putting them on paper; demonstrating 'their' thinking and justifying their choices for vocabulary, punctuation, or organisation; making errors and being vulnerable as a writer; and identifying their mistakes by modelling rereading and editing when checking it makes sense and for basic skills.
- Guided writing sessions are used to target specific needs of both groups and individuals.
- Shared writing is used at the discretion of the class teacher.

### Editing and redrafting

- Throughout composition, our writers develop their skills to plan, draft, evaluate/ edit, proof-read and present final pieces. Regular and robust editing, refinement and redrafting is taught explicitly once per half term in KS2 and up to twice per term in KS1. Techniques include improving 'teacher creations' to focus learning on identified criteria, progressing to working on actual pieces in KS2. Editing techniques are explicitly modelled to children in groups or through whole-class approach dependent on need.
- Editing occurs in pairs, or independently, using an editing station approach in a carousel format. Each station focusses on one aspect of writing transcription to be embedded- often from the current learning journey or an area which the teacher has identified as a 'gap' or skill to be secured. Children focus on that one aspect together, exploring it in each other's work, making changes in green, before moving onto the next station with a different transcription focus.
- Editing can also take the form of redrafting where a key section, paragraph or sentence is rewritten using a glued-on paper flap.
- Task dependent, but on occasion, children will then produce a 'final piece' using the use of technology, such as Chrome Books to word process or i-Pads to record in order to 'publish' their work for their audience.

### Key Stage 1 and 2 Assessment

Teachers use formative and summative assessment to assess writing in Key Stage 1 and 2. Assessment of punctuation and grammar from the learning journey enables teachers to respond rapidly and plan a subsequent learning journey, consolidating, deepening understanding or

providing challenge. Children falling behind, will have differentiated learning journeys which will form the basis for any intervention.

Termly, assessment of writing is completed for all children based on the Durham Assessment without Levels for Writing. Cross phase moderation across school, at the end of each term, is used to validate teacher judgements.

Children undertake the national writing and GPS assessments at the end of Year Two and Year Six. Teacher assessment draws upon the Teacher Assessment Frameworks as published by the Standards Testing Agency. These statements are incorporated into children's English Learning Journeys from the Spring 2 and Summer terms, providing regular evidence of where the children are working.

### **Marking**

Marking in English is in accordance with the school's Marking Policy. A copy of our school's marking guidance is glued into the front of every English book at the start of the year. Please refer to our school's marking policy for more detail. Children are expected to respond to the adult's marking, even after editing has occurred. We feel that this is important to show that writing is continuously crafted and developed.