



WRITING POLICY

Intent

At Gascoigne Primary School, we recognise that writing is integral to all aspects of life and we mindfully endeavour to ensure that children develop a lifelong, healthy and enthusiastic attitude towards writing. The skill of writing enables pupils to communicate with themselves and others while documenting and conveying their knowledge and ideas. Building on experiences, it encourages expression and higher order thinking skills to develop. Thus, creating a culture of writing in our school ensures our children are given the best opportunities to build their capacity and confidence in a range of writing styles

By creating a stimulating environment and employing appropriate resources, we are determined to provide all pupils with a supportive writing curriculum which will allow learners to recognise their full potential and develop their:

- Literacy
- Creativity
- Independence
- Inquisitiveness
- Inquiry skills
- Confidence

Writing skills underpin most elements of the school curriculum and is an essential life-skill. Considering the fundamental importance of writing in everyday life, we are driven by the need to develop each learner's writing ability, thus enabling them to play a full part in society.

The Four Principles

The following four principles underpin our intent at Gascoigne.

1. Writing explores Ourselves

Through the teaching and learning of writing and exposure to different types of texts, our children are encouraged to learn and communicate through writing more about themselves, such as who they are, where they come from, and what their place is in the world. This leads them to question, analyse and explore their values and how they manifest as part of their character.

2. Writing widens our World

Through the teaching and learning of writing and exposure to a variety of different texts, our children will acquire knowledge and an understanding of our world; communicated through writing. Non-fiction texts especially, broaden our children's understanding of our world's history, culture and multiple perspectives; resulting in writing which communicates this knowledge through critique, evaluation and debate.

3. Writing underpins our ongoing Education

Through the teaching and learning of writing skills and exposure to different types of texts at Gascoigne, pupils develop skills that will allow them to both access their continuing education and participate fully in society.

4. Writing affirms our Rights

Through the teaching and learning of writing and exposure to different types of texts, our children are reminded of their rights and that we are a Rights Respecting School. Writing allows children to communicate and explore these rights, in many forms and genres.

The Gascoigne aims:

- To develop children, who are imaginative, creative, independent, inquisitive, inquiring and confident writers.
- To provide children with a range of writing skills and strategies to enable them to write confidently with comprehension, cohesion and enjoyment for a range of purposes, in a variety of contexts and for different audiences.
- To ensure no opportunity is missed to foster an enjoyment of writing amongst pupils and a recognition of its value, by setting work that is challenging, inspirational and motivating, helping them to develop a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards writing, which will nurture a life-long love of writing.
- To provide opportunities to explore a variety of different genres and to be exposed regularly to high quality texts, providing a model for pupils to aspire to.
- To ensure children have a clear understanding of the writing process: plan, draft, revise and edit their own work, and learn how to self and peer assess against the success criteria.
- To develop children's ability to self-assess by reflecting on the quality of their writing, encouraging them to construct informed opinions and implement strategies to improve their own work.
- To monitor writing progress effectively to evaluate, promote and maintain high levels of attainment.
- To ensure that children with writing difficulties are identified early and support is given promptly.
- To work in partnership with parents /carers in order to develop each child's full writing potential.

Implementation

Teaching and Learning of writing at Gascoigne

At Gascoigne, we are following the 2014 National Curriculum for the teaching and learning of writing skills. We are committed to raising the standards of children's writing to ensure that all children are progressing and achieving at least in line with national expectations. The curriculum will be monitored by the English Leader of Learning to ensure that it is being used effectively to provide challenge, stimulation and excitement to improve the standards of writing from year 1 to year 6. In EYFS, the SLT Link for EYFS will monitor the standards in writing.

Gascoigne Primary School believes that two distinct, but related areas are involved in teaching children to write: transcription and comprehension. Transcription covers the technical aspects of writing: handwriting, spelling, grammar and punctuation. Composition is about sharing their ideas and thinking about the purpose for their writing. Both are essential for developing lifelong successful writers. It is imperative that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

Strategies for the teaching of writing

Our children are provided with a variety of opportunities to develop, extend and deepen their writing skills in and across each phase of education. In Nursery and Reception, the learning of writing follows the Early Years Foundation Stages Framework. Children are given opportunities to extend their understanding of language learning through play and investigation, developing their characteristics of learning. The National Curriculum describes what must be

taught in key stages 1 and 2. The school has a set of key objectives in writing that provide detailed guidance for the implementation of the National Curriculum for writing.

Key Stages 1 and 2

- One-hour lessons engage children in the development of grammatical understanding, punctuation, phonics and spelling strategies based on high-quality texts. The elements of the writing process are also taught during this time.
- Meaningful contexts and high-quality texts are provided as the hook or as the inspiration for writing.
- Quality speaking, listening and drama activities precede writing to enable the development of quality writing skills and outcomes.
- Teachers exploit cross-curricular links wherever possible and further develop writing skills within a variety of contexts.
- A clear model for how to meet lesson objectives is presented to the class at the outset.
- Teacher modelling of the thought processes and standards required are clear and regular.
- Writing is linked to learning-focussed objectives, with related success criteria.
- Writing composition is taught explicitly to the children every week. The reinforcement of this teaching is also featured across the full range of subject areas.
- The teaching of grammar is mostly contextualised within the teaching of writing composition and exemplified during Shared and Guided Writing (as outlined in the following sections).
- The thought processes involved in writing is modelled to the children through both *Shared and Guided Writing* sessions:

Shared Writing

- ✓ Shared Writing takes place during whole class teaching, where ideas are shared and discussed.
- ✓ The sessions are well-paced and interactive, e.g. the teacher employs intentional errors, the use of pupil whiteboards for the quick composition of ideas and formative assessment.
- ✓ These ideas are recorded and refined by the teacher, with them modelling the skills needed to be a writer.
- ✓ The Shared Writing session primarily focuses on how to achieve the success criteria for a given objective within the writing to be completed. It also provides a vehicle for the teaching of grammar.
- ✓ Children then have the opportunity to practise and extend their own writing independently, or in a Guided Group.

Guided Writing

- ✓ Every day, both the class teacher and TLA conduct a learning objective-focussed Guided Group.
- ✓ In this session, a common learning need is targeted with a small group of pupils. Ideas are shared and discussed and then recorded by the teacher, modelling the skills needed to write successfully. This modelling process may be repeated as necessary.
- ✓ Children then evidence their progress independently, using the guidance to inform their own writing.

The Teaching of Basic Skills:

1: Grammar

Rationale:

At Gascoigne Primary School, we value the importance of enabling children to become confident, literate individuals, who can actively select and use a wide range of grammatical forms. We work from the principle that the ideal methodology for the teaching of grammar is through the wider teaching of writing composition.

Aims:

- 1) To successfully deliver the *National Curriculum for Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation* to all pupils, as appropriate to their learning needs.
- 2) To ensure that the teaching of grammar and punctuation is effectively planned for by selecting grammatical ideas and principles relevant to the year group in question, and pertinent to the text/topic being covered.
- 3) To maximise the progress of pupils through referring to grammatical concepts as key teaching points (underpinned by success criteria) by '*thinking out loud*' during writing composition.
- 4) To feedback on pupils' understanding of grammatical concepts verbally and using pupil conferencing.
- 5) To improve outcomes for Gascoigne pupils in SPAG tests.

Procedures

- Grammatical concepts are introduced to the children through the texts studied. Teachers plan to teach the full *Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation* content of the National Curriculum, selecting which concepts are best suited to each given text/topic.
- Lessons, or sections of lessons may then be devoted to consolidating the understanding of the grammar principle in question. Evidence of this teaching will appear in the Lined Book.
- Grammatical concepts will then appear as success criteria in writing composition lessons, and as such will be explicitly referenced/exemplified during modelled writing, e.g. through teachers '*thinking out loud*' or making deliberate omissions/errors.

Assessment

- Pupils' learning in Grammar will be assessed against the (National Curriculum-derived) targets on the TAF. Progress against the expectations will be discussed with the children via their individual TAF.

2: Spelling

- Spellings are given to children from year 1 to year 6.
- Children are taught to follow the LSCWC (*Look, Say, Cover, Write and Check*) procedure, when learning new spellings.
- Spellings are sent home for children to practise over the course of the school week.
- Spellings are assessed once a week.
- Spellings are assessed by the writing of individual words and / or by dictated sentences depending on the ability of individual children.

3: Handwriting

- Children in all classes use a sharp pencil within their handwriting practice.
- All classes from year 1 to year 6 use the *Nelson scheme* to develop a consistent and fluent handwriting style.
- A '*Pen Licence*' may be earned by children (most likely in key stage 2) whose handwriting is joined and legible, and where the child's general standards of the presentation of their work is good.
- All children work towards the use of joined handwriting in their everyday writing tasks. Where progress on this appears to be slow, additional tailored handwriting support is organised and delivered.
- Timetabled handwriting lessons occur every week.
- The handwriting of all adults in the school should reflect the high expectations that we have of our children.

Planning

- To ensure the teaching of writing is effectively planned, and responsive to learners' needs, teachers plan the teaching of both writing composition and *spelling, punctuation and grammar* (SPAG) in line with National Curriculum programmes of study as appropriate for the age of the children.
- The meeting of NC objectives for each year group is paramount and learning objectives are revisited and reinforced throughout the year.
- The Book Study or Topic writing planning covers a six-week period, which will cover two different genres.
- Every class has at least five hour-long writing lessons a week. These are supplemented by at least one additional discrete grammar, handwriting and spelling lesson.
- For all classes, individual lessons are planned to meet the needs of each class, in line with the NC Objectives.
- Clear learning-focussed objectives and related success criteria are provided for every writing lesson.
- Differentiation occurs through providing different degrees of support to enable all children to meet the objectives stated.
- Pupils complete LO-focussed activities throughout every lesson.
- Planning for writing is recorded on the medium-term plan and daily planning proformas.
- Before a unit is taught, decisions about what content to include will be taken based on thorough understanding of the expected outcome at the end of the unit. Each activity will be scrutinised and evaluated in terms of the:
 - contribution it would make to that outcome
 - needs of the class
- The 'What?' and 'Why?' for every activity should be entirely clear to teachers, pupils (and observers). For every activity undertaken, pupils should be able to articulate why they are doing it with reference to the impact it will have on their writing at the end of the unit.
- Considering the above, and before the PPA session, YGLs will devise a proposed sequence for the unit.
- During planning, the outline for the unit will be agreed by all members of the year group team.
- A significant and engaging 'hook' is a prerequisite for every unit. This must be discussed and agreed with the SLT Link/Writing Lead before the PPA session. In the majority of the cases, this 'hook' will be the core text being studied at the time, but in its absence, it may be a short film, event, etc.

Individual Planning

- After the unit medium-term planning has been agreed, individual teachers are then responsible for producing their own daily lesson plans.
- Individual planning will be monitored by SLT.
- All teachers must keep a 'Teacher Modelling' book, which will contain the modelled examples to be shared with the children. How this book is then used in lessons is up to the teacher to decide, however best practice would see it used as a 'special journal' that the children aspire to emulate.
- All taught writing activities should feature in the teacher modelling book.
- Teacher modelling books will be monitored alongside pupils' books.

Sharing and Documenting expected outcomes

The success criteria for the end of unit outcome must be stuck in pupils' books at the start of each unit/topic and displayed on the learning wall. This ensures that detailed outcome expectations for the extended piece of independent writing to be completed at the end of the unit is made clear at the outset.

The Role of Drama

- Drama activities (e.g. hot seating/freeze frame/conscience alley) should precede each writing task.
- All drama activities contribute to the achievement of learning objectives and their success criteria.
- The skills required to meet these objectives should be modelled to the children.
- It is likely that Drama lessons/activities will involve the elicitation of vocabulary from the children; this vocabulary should be scribed and used during the subsequent teaching of writing.

Differentiation/Inclusion

- Differentiation should be through the degree of support provided to enable all learners to access the lessons. To this end, it is expected that scaffolded support prompts including word banks will be provided for those who need them.
- The way in which pupil pairings are used to enable all pupils to make progress, forms a significant part of this.

Recorded Learning

- Each half-termly plan will lead to a total of six pieces of extended writing. These will include: a baseline piece of writing at the beginning of the genre-specific teaching sequence, one heavily modelled piece of writing and a third more independent extended outcome at the end of the third week. This cycle will be repeated for the next three weeks but linked to a different genre.
- The baseline outcome (which will be used to set individual targets for improvement for each pupil) and the modelled piece of writing will be recorded in the Lined book. The independent extended writing piece will appear in the 'Writing Journey book. This last piece will be assessed using the TAF for the year group.
- Evidence in Literacy planning/the Lined books must demonstrate that children are developing writing skills every day.
- To emphasise the specific skills that are being taught, extended writing tasks are underpinned by clear success criteria. These must be reproduced in books and are used for assessment purposes.
- The expectations for extended writing will vary across year groups but will always involve children being expected to apply the skills that were modelled to them, and thereby meet the given success criteria.
- Writing lessons should be recorded at least on four out of five days a week.

Writing Culture

Developing a writing culture at Gascoigne is fundamental to the progression of the children not only in writing but across all other subjects. The importance of writing is promoted by all adults, and quality writing is routinely celebrated and in order to facilitate a culture of continuous improvement amongst staff at Gascoigne; teachers and TLAs engage in regular peer-to-peer mentoring/dialogue around best practice in the teaching of writing. Teaching staff have access support and clear, modelled examples of quality teaching from the SLT and other experienced colleagues.

Wider Opportunities to support a Writing Culture

In support of developing a writing culture, pupils at Gascoigne develop as writers through a wide range of additional targeted provision.

- The whole school environment (in particular, the teaching and non-teaching spaces) should inspire pupils to write throughout the day (both during lessons and at break times).
- Displays throughout the school emphasize our commitment to improving writing.

- Pupils are referred to or self-access a rich range of quality extra-curricular speaking, listening and writing activities (e.g. Broadway Theatre drama group, Poetry recitals, Creative Writing Club and Debating Group).
- A school newspaper '*Gascoigne's Voice*' is produced on a half-termly basis, researched, written and edited by pupils; a team of pupil journalists report on school and community events, teachers are encouraged to use the prospect of inclusion in the paper as an incentive for children's writing.
- Pupils are given opportunities to contribute to the school website, creating a sense of ownership.
- Pupils are encouraged to articulate the fact that they are part of a '*Writing School*'.
- Strong links exist between the school and the Broadway Theatre in Barking, expanding pupils' cultural horizons.
- Annual celebration and focus on Poetry Week and Shakespeare Week.
- Authors come to our school and share their writing process with the pupils.
- Pupils enter writing competitions.
- Quality pieces of writing are celebrated within the year group, in assemblies and online.
- A '*Writing Champions*' initiative will be in place from September 2020. Within this, children's writing is celebrated, with rewards given to pupils and classes that meet the most writing targets.

Learning environments

- Content on learning walls is current and reflects the learning journey undertaken throughout the unit.
- Each class displays examples of pupils' high-quality writing.
- Laminated A4 '*What?*' and '*Why?*' cards are displayed on the *Learning Wall* and should also be available for the teacher to refer to when informing and questioning pupils about the purpose of activities.
- Modelled examples are displayed.
- The classroom is a vocabulary-rich environment.

Assessment

Assessment is regarded as an integral part of teaching and learning and is a continuous process. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to assess all pupils in their class. We strive to make our assessment purposeful, allowing us to match the correct level of work to the needs of the pupils, thus benefiting the pupils and ensuring progress.

- **Assessment for Learning:** We are continually assessing our pupils and recording their progress. Information for assessment is gathered in various ways: by talking to the children, observing their work, dialogic marking. Teachers use this assessment information to adapt current provision, plan further work and set new targets.
- **Assessment of Learning:** The attainment and progress of children is assessed and recorded three times during the school year. This information is gathered from Teacher assessment of a portfolio of independent pieces of writing, which can be found in the writing journey book. This data is used to set pupil targets and identify priorities for intervention. This is conducted in line with the school's agreed assessment procedures.
- **Feedback:** Children are provided with constructive and timely dialogic feedback in line with our assessment policy. Verbal feedback is given during lessons in addition to regular self and peer-assessment opportunities. Teachers provide parents with feedback on their child's progress and achievement at parent's evenings and through the end of year report.

Formative / Summative Assessment and Pupil Targets

- Pupils' developing abilities as writers are assessed through ongoing formative assessment. This process occurs through daily interactions with learners, marking and pupil conferencing. Ongoing formative assessment enables teachers and pupils to derive targets for improvement, which are captured through the writing TAF.

- In particular, the areas for development identified by detailed assessment (particularly of independent writing) will inform the setting of pupil targets, which are recorded in the TAF and given to pupils in the form of a *Target card*.
- Teachers will also track pupils' progress against the assessments placed on *Target Tracker*. This will enable them to identify trends for individuals and groups, and thereby tailor planning accordingly.

Average '*Attainment steps*' timeline for each academic year:

- Beginning (B) = end of October;
- Beginning + (B+) = end of December;
- Working within (W) = end of February;
- Working within + (W+) = end of April;
- Secure (S) = End of June/July.

Pupil progress meetings, between YGL / Class teachers and Assessment Leader, take place regularly, in which children's progress, achievements and areas for development are identified and steps put into place to close any gaps. The Writing Lead will monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning of writing in year 1 to year 6. The SLT link with responsibility for EYFS will monitor standards in that phase.

Vulnerable Groups

All children with particular learning needs, (including SEN and *More Able* students) steps are monitored at the end of each phase (see section above entitled '**Assessment**'), as well as through formative classroom assessment, and provisions put into place to support identified children, such as Wave 2 and Wave 3 support, pre-teaching, booster classes and writing clubs. Writing materials are carefully chosen to meet the needs of all children; particularly those who need extra support or challenge.

Evidence of Progress

- In order to provide evidence of children's progress, each pupil will produce at least two pieces of independent (un-modelled) writing per unit of work (approximately two per half term). The independent pieces of writing will be of the same genre as the one taught during the unit.
- Year groups should aim to ensure that the 12 independent pieces cover a range of genres across the year.
- Independent pieces of writing will be completed in a separate book ('Writing Journey'), providing clear evidence of the child's progress.
- Evidence from the Lined book may also be used to support any judgements made against the '*I Can*' TAF statements. However, teachers should be mindful of the degree of modelling that occurred within non-independent pieces of writing that are being used for assessment purposes.
- Children may make use of wall displays and/or a success criteria checklist in completing work in the 'Writing Journey' books.
- All pieces of work in the 'Writing Journey' books should be assessed in detail with sufficient immediacy to enable pupils to understand their areas for development.
- The areas for development identified in independent writing will inform the setting of pupil targets, which are recorded in pupil target cards.
- In EYFS, children's mark-making is assessed daily, according to the *Development Matters* document.

Impact

Writing in our school is progressive, challenging and planned to meet the needs of our children. Between key stages 1 and 2 our children have made average progress. Our SPaG results at the end of key stage 2 exceed national averages in both the percentages at the expected standard and exceeding the expected standard. We are ambitious and we strive for the best possible outcomes in writing for our children. Since the beginning of the year, we have seen some further improvements in the progress data, and we are hopeful that this trend will continue. A shift in our curriculum provision from a writing scheme to a book-study model has been a contributing factor, as well as a review of our assessment model in writing. Pupil feedback tells us that our children are now more enthusiastic, independent and reflective writers across a wide range of genres. Assessments are carried out regularly enabling us to measure and monitor the impact of our writing curriculum provision in a timely manner. Regular rigorous *Pupil Progress* meetings have also resulted in children who are on track to being further challenged; and for those where this is not the case interventions have been put in place more promptly to ensure opportunities for progress.

Monitoring of the Policy

We are aware of the need to monitor and update the school's Writing Policy on a regular basis so that we can take account of improvements made in our practice, and changes to assessments, materials and government requirements. We will therefore review this policy at least once every two years. The members of the Senior Leadership Team with responsibility for writing are Ms Ferreira (Primary - year 1 to year 6) and Mrs Buchner (EYFS - SLT Link).

Formal Review

Writing throughout the school and how it reflects this policy, will also be reviewed throughout the year in the following ways:

- Governors' work scrutiny;
 - SLT/YGL planning, recorded learning, assessment scrutiny;
 - Learning walks;
 - EYFS/KS1/KS2 external moderation;
 - EYFS/KS1/KS2 internal moderation;
 - Moderation with other schools.
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- *Writing Leader of Teaching and Learning – year 1 to year 6: Ms Paola Ferreira*
 - *Writing Leader of Teaching and Learning - EYFS: Mrs Anre Buchner*

Policy Ratified by Governing Body : May 2020

Policy Review Date: May 2022