

Writing at Otterburn Primary School

At Otterburn Primary School, we want all children to be able to communicate confidently their ideas, knowledge and emotions through the spoken and written word so they can be the very best versions of themselves.

Our Intent

We aim to:

- Guide and nurture each individual on their own personal journeys to becoming successful writers.
- Provide exciting writing opportunities and experiences that engage and enhance all pupils.
- We want all children to acquire a wide vocabulary and to be able to spell new words by effectively applying the spelling patterns and rules they learn throughout their time in primary school.
- We want all children to have a solid understanding of grammar and apply it effectively to their writing.
- We want them 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 children should be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their writing, in part by developing a legible, cursive, individual handwriting style by the time they move to middle and secondary school.
- We want every child to have a good knowledge of phonics to springboard children to becoming fluent writers.
- To plan a progressive curriculum to build upon previous teaching, with regular assessment to ensure each child's needs are met to reach their full potential.

Implementation

Writing is taught every day at Otterburn. Each class studies a different high quality text over a half term. This can be for a shorter timescale depending on the text type, age of the children etc. In Key Stage, this is the same text that is studied in the Guided Reading sessions. We follow the Power of Reading approach as we believe reading and writing are inextricably linked and therefore encourages children to make links and become confident writers.

We ensure that a variety of genres are taught and built upon across the year and the key stage.

Children are given the opportunity to apply the knowledge from English in other subjects. Children acquire skills to plan, draft and refine their written work and are encouraged in being able to identify their own areas for improvement.

We teach writing through a number of approaches:

- Opportunities to participate in drama & spoken language activities
- Exploring the features of different text types and modelled examples
- Handwriting practise
- Vocabulary practise
- Shared writing (modelled expectations)
- Discrete Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar lessons
- Independent writing
- Planning, drafting, editing, up-levelling and presenting
- Performing

Handwriting

It is paramount that children are rigorously taught correct letter formation from the very beginning of their time in school. During the EYFS at Otterburn Primary School, the children are taught to sit properly in order to have the correct posture for writing, hold a pencil in the correct position and develop a legible handwriting style. This helps in developing both a child's Key Strengths (Gross & Fine Motor Skills) and Key Abilities (Knowledge).

From KS1, we have handwriting lessons. Once children are confidently forming letters and developing a joined style a pen license will be awarded and children have the option to write with pen. Teachers are expected to role model the school's handwriting style when marking children's work, writing on the board and on displays around the school. However, it is important that children experience a range of handwriting styles just as in the real world.

Spellings

Through exploring spelling patterns and rules, we aim to create confident and proficient spellers using a discrete teaching approach underpinned by phonics.

Children are also taught to:

- Spell accurately and identify reasons for mis-spellings.
- Proof-read their spellings
- Recognise and use word origins, families and roots to build their skills
- Use dictionaries and thesauruses.

Impact

Teachers use assessment as an integral part of the teaching and learning process and link it clearly to the children's next learning steps.

- Formative assessment is linked to the learning objectives for the unit of work.
- Constructive marking and 'modelling' where appropriate encourages children to redraft and refine work in pink pen.
- Teachers respond to learning in green pen in books when marking to ensure that children know exactly what they need to do next to make progress in their writing.
- Hot and cold writes are used to assess where children are in their learning journey.

The impact on our children is that they have the knowledge and skills to be able to write successfully for a purpose and audience. With the implementation of this writing sequence being established and taught in both key stages, children are becoming more confident writers and have the ability to plan, draft and edit their own work much more effectively.

By the end of key stage 2, we hope that children will have developed a writer's craft, they will enjoy sustained writing and be able to manipulate language, grammar and punctuation to create effect. As all aspects of English are an integral part of the curriculum, the impact will be transferrable across other subjects.