



John Shelton Community Primary School

Writing

At John Shelton Primary School, we believe that being able to write coherently not only enables pupils to communicate effectively, but also allows them to experience the joy of crafting their own texts.

It is important that pupils learn to write independently from an early stage and this is encouraged through emergent writing within the EYFS. Children in Nursery start with being encouraged to mark make using a variety of tools and materials. In Reception, children follow Read Write Inc where phonics and handwriting is a big focus. Children move onto writing words and sentences as the year progresses. Our children are encouraged to write independently about what they are interested in.

During Year 1, the children follow Read Write Inc as part of their English lessons. Children are grouped based on their phonic and reading ability. The children read a range of fiction and non-fiction books completing reading and writing tasks related to the texts. The main writing focus is on oral composition, sentence structure and punctuation. As the children progress through the scheme, writing tasks become more extended and there is more emphasis on using exciting vocabulary.

Year 2 upwards, use texts and other stimuli to inspire their writing. Each half term, children study a fiction and a non-fiction unit, learning the features of the text types and using these to craft their own writing. Each unit starts with a rich text to engage and enthuse our children. We, at John Shelton Primary School, see reading and writing as interlinked.

We know that for pupils to become successful writers they need to:

- experience a wide range of written texts, which is the primary source of knowledge about the written word and how it 'sounds'
- orally tell and retell stories and other texts
- experience both shared and guided writing, where the teacher focuses attention explicitly on the technicalities of writing
- regularly practise writing independently.

Therefore, class teachers plan a unit of work to encompass all of these things to ensure are children can be as successful as they can.

At the beginning of each unit the children produce a 'cold write' based on the text type studied. This provides the teacher with a good assessment base to plan a unit of work in order to move the children forward with their writing.

The writing process at John Shelton Primary School covers 3 main parts. Initially, children explore the text type, identifying the features and what a good one looks like. Next, word, sentence and grammar activities enable children to improve their writing skills and the planning, writing and editing stage, where children craft their own piece of writing by applying all the knowledge they have learnt over the unit.

To finish the unit, children produce a 'hot write', where they get the opportunity to apply their newly acquired skills to a different piece of writing. Progress is then able to be measured by the teacher and next steps identified.

Writing at John Shelton Primary School is informed by assessment. Teachers identify the learning needs of children based on their assessments; they set precise writing targets that will address the needs of all learners. Our children are encouraged to apply their writing targets across the curriculum. The teacher explains the targets to the children and regularly reviews them when targets are achieved, they are celebrated. Feedback is provided at every stage; this may take the form of self-assessment, peer-assessment or teacher-assessment.

Guided writing

Guided writing is a key step between whole class teaching and independent writing. It is during the guided writing session that children are supported to improve their writing and to work with increasing independence.

During guided writing, teachers work with carefully selected groups of children according to their current targets or specific needs as informed by assessment for learning.

At John Shelton Primary School, there is a flexible and personalised approach to guided writing. Groups should be selected according to current needs, so they should be very fluid. Children with similar abilities or levels of attainment do not necessarily have the same needs at a particular time.

When planning a guided session, the teacher should be thinking about the specific needs of the children today and whether there is a group with similar needs. If so, these can be addressed through a guided writing session.

Following assessment and the identification of the learning needs of the class, the teacher groups children with similar needs. The number of children in any group will also vary, more than six to eight children would not usually form a manageable group.

The groups should be flexible to enable each child to achieve success. This may mean that a child attends two different guided writing sessions to consolidate a particular area of learning or to extend the child's learning

There is no set pattern for the number of guided writing sessions to be taught. This will depend on the needs of the children. It is important to remember that guided writing is one of the key teaching strategies to support children in achieving their targets, so it should take place reasonably frequently.

Guided writing can take place at any point of the writing process.

Handwriting

Handwriting and the presentation of work within our school is important in all areas of the curriculum. Pupils are taught handwriting from Reception onwards using the Nelson Handwriting Scheme. In Reception children are taught individual letters in the order that they learn each letter sound in phonics. In Reception and Year 1 pupils begin learning letter formation and where to start each letter in preparation for later joining. As the pupils become more confident in recording letters (from Y2 onwards) they are taught to join their handwriting in the school style. As they progress through the school they are supported in generating an individual style which is both efficient and neat.

Spelling

In order to become confident writers pupils also need to become proficient at spelling. In EYFS and Key Stage 1, spelling is intrinsically linked to reading, as the pupils learn to use phonics for both of these activities. Pupils are encouraged to apply their phonics to spelling throughout the curriculum. Children in Year 2 upwards, follow the Ruth Miskin Spelling scheme. This scheme focusses on spelling patterns and rules. Children are encouraged to work collaboratively to improve their spelling. As part of this programme, children have an individual log book where they can record words and spelling patterns which they find difficult. We encourage our children to take ownership of their learning. This spelling work is further supported by homework which includes key words to learn to spell and to practise the rules they are learning in the classroom.

Pupils requiring additional support with their spelling may take part in an intervention with teaching assistants to improve their spelling of high frequency words and their phonic skills.