

# Writing at St Monica's School

"You can make anything by writing." CS Lewis

"A word after a word after a word is power." Margaret Atwood



*'There can be no more important subject than English in the school curriculum. English is a pre-eminent world language, it is at the heart of our culture and it is the language medium in which most of our pupils think and communicate. Literacy skills are also crucial to pupils' learning in other subjects across the curriculum.'* Ofsted 2012 'Moving English Forward'

At St. Monica's we believe the development of language and Literacy skills are of the highest priority; striving for both outstanding attainment and progress in English across the school. We aim to develop children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes across the curriculum; enabling them to use language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings.

## The aims of English are:

- To enable children to speak clearly and audibly, taking into account their audience;
- To encourage children to listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard.
- To enable children to adapt their speech to a wide range of circumstances and demands.
- To develop children's abilities to reflect on their own and others' contributions and the language used.
- To enable children to evaluate their own and others' contributions through a range of drama activities.
- To develop confident, independent readers through an appropriate focus on word, sentence and text-level knowledge.
- To encourage children to become enthusiastic and reflective readers through contact with a range of interesting and challenging texts.
- To help children enjoy writing and recognise its value.
- To enable children to write with accuracy and meaning in narrative and non-fiction.
- To increase the children's ability to use planning, drafting and editing to improve their work.

## During Foundation Stage at St Monica's School

From Reception upwards, children develop the gross and fine motor skills that allow for a tripod pencil grip. They are taught to develop their control of their writing and mark making tools.

We provide children with a vocabulary-rich environment so that they recognise ~~th~~ text has meaning.

We encourage them to understand that they can use mark-making to communicate with others.

Reception children have daily English-focused sessions and access to a range of resources to encourage accessing and making texts – especially where those texts are meaningful to themselves as well as others. Hand-in-hand with the Read Write Inc. phonics programme, we use the Twinkl Handwriting scheme to consolidate the links between phonemes and graphemes and develop word-building skills in both reading and writing.

Children are given opportunities to orally rehearse the things they want to write before committing them to paper.

## During Key Stage 1 at St Monica's School

Children in KS1 are taught how to write using different structures for a range of purposes and audiences through their English lessons. We teach grammar each week through the Deepening Understanding scheme.

Children are provided with a wide range of stimuli for writing: inspired by reading; thematic writing; personal and shared experiences such as trips; film, video and music; practical activities etc.

The children progress through the Twinkl Handwriting scheme alongside their daily Read Write Inc. phonics lessons.

We encourage children to understand correct letter and numeral formation and orientation, word-spacing and sentence building. In Year 1, we move the children on to start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters.

We aim that all children leave Year 2 with neat, joined, cursive handwriting.

The teaching of handwriting is embedded in literacy and throughout the curriculum. It is also taught weekly in independent lessons. Adults model correct letter formation and orientation effectively and monitor the execution of the letters and strokes for each individual child.

Children are encouraged to transfer their writing skills from their handwriting practice to all writing tasks across the curriculum.

There is a focus on children building a portfolio of evidence of ~~the~~ writing skills for moderation and statutory assessment at the

## During Key Stage 2 at St Monica's School

The Twinkl Handwriting scheme and weekly sessions continue in Key Stage 2. There is an emphasis on children developing consistent, mature, handwriting using a neat, joined, cursive style which is practised and evident in their books across the curriculum.

The aim is that all children should be writing in ink by the end of Year 3.

The school uses Read Write Inc. spelling to follow-on from Read Write Inc. Phonics.

The stimuli for writing come from the Power of Reading. As in KS1, we continue to include focus texts and topics; personal and shared reading; film, video, music and art; personal experience and opinion; current affairs and events etc and children are taught the key grammatical structures and forms in the context of their writing (through the Deepening Understanding Grammar Scheme).

As well as following the Power of Reading scheme, through Whole Class Reading sessions, children learn to ~~about~~ text to understand the structure, vocabulary, register and style of a wide range of genres for a variety of subjects, purposes and audiences.

They are encouraged to write at increasing length to build stamina and focus. They are given, wherever possible, real reasons and audiences for their writing.

There is not only a focus on children building evidence of their writing skills for moderation and statutory assessment at the

	<p>end of the key stage. We also intend that writing skills are securely embedded to provide a solid foundation for competence and fluency.</p>	<p>end of the key stage but also an intention that they become confident and competent communicators in writing for life.</p>
<p><b>Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school's curriculum maps show the scope and sequence of writing skills to be covered each term from the acquisition of early writing skills through to provision for more able writers.</li> <li>There is a medium term plan for each unit of work in Planpanion (used for Grammar Lessons) and Power of Reading (writing), Oxford Owl (spelling) to guide and build upon the progression of writing, SPaG, genre features and writing skills through all key stages.</li> <li>Plans for Whole Class Reading sessions are annotated and adapted to show how less able and those new to English will access the content.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Teaching</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers follow a teaching and learning cycle that includes; deconstruction of text; grammar focused teaching; modelled writing, shared and paired writing; guided writing leading to independent writing, editing and redrafting.</li> <li>Flexible groupings are used during lessons with adults support carefully planned and targeted to develop children's confidence and fluency in writing.</li> <li>Teachers are expected to demonstrate the correct handwriting style appropriate to their year group and to model having their own mature, neat, joined handwriting when writing on the board or for displays.</li> <li>The English curriculum provides for creating close link between reading skills, speaking and listening skills and writing.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Marking and feedback</b></p> <p>Work should be marked according to the school marking policy by using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peer- and self-assessment</li> <li>Oral feedback</li> <li>Written feedback where appropriate.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Resourcing and display</b></p> <p>Because literacy skills are such a fundamental part of learning, the school has invested in a very wide variety and amount of books and supporting materials to develop writing skills and provide stimuli for writing on a wide range of themes.</p> <p><b>Working wall:</b></p> <p>Grammar working walls are intended to 'make the learning visible' and to track and celebrate the children's progress through the process of writing as well as to provide a resource to encourage children to apply their SPaG skills, use specific sentence structures and registers in their writing.</p> <p>The working walls complement the use of modelled and guided writing in the sessions and provide a 'reminder' to children of the genre 'ingredients' and features they need to use.</p> <p><b>Stimuli</b></p> <p>Teachers makes full use of the Power of Reading books, film, music, art and 'real- experiences' as stimuli for writing often providing opportunities for drama, speaking and listening etc to provide vocabulary and content-foci for the children.</p> <p>WAGOLL (What A Good One Looks Like) provides examples of excellence in children's writing to showcase expectations for handwriting and presentation as well as for outcomes in terms of genre features, vocabulary, structure and organisation.</p> <p><b>Tools for Writing</b></p> <p>The school provides pencils for children in EYFS. Children from Yr1 upwards bring in their own fully stocked pencil case. Children have opportunities to use word-processing technology on computers, Chromebooks and iPads. Handwriting books with guidelines, interactive whiteboard resources and a range of practical material-resources are provided for children to support the development of handwriting. The exercise books used in all subjects have appropriate line spacing to facilitate the development of the correct size, formation and orientation of letters and organisation of written work.</p>	
<p><b>Assessment</b></p> <p><b>Formative:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AFL is used within each lesson to establish next steps for pupils.</li> <li>Writing is marked and children are conferenced with during the writing process to provide effective feedback for editing and improving</li> <li>Children are encouraged to self- and peer- assess elements of their writing.</li> <li>Spelling and SPaG is monitored and assessed in writing tasks.</li> </ul> <p><b>Summative:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All children in EYFS undergo baseline assessment for Writing skills.</li> <li>In Year 1, children undergo statutory phonic testing.</li> <li>In Year 2 children's writing is both internally and externally moderated using the statutory assessment framework.</li> <li>All children's writing in Year 2 is moderated and assessed using the Teachers' Handbooks as an assessment framework in the Summer term. They also have an end-of-year SPaG test.</li> <li>In Year 6 children's writing is both internally and externally moderated using the statutory assessment framework. Children also sit the statutory end-of-key-stage SPaG tests.</li> <li>Regular spelling tests are used across the school. This is assessed in various ways eg through dictation</li> <li>No more marking is used to assess writing and national comparisons annually (Yrs 1-6)</li> <li>Teachers meet each term to moderate writing.</li> </ul> <p><b>EYFS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers, Nursery Nurses and TAs make observations regarding the pupils' development in this subject.</li> </ul>		

## Monitoring

Monitoring is undertaken by the subject leader and SLT during the school year. This will include:

- learning walks during English, writing-specific lessons.
- scrutiny of English books.
- scrutiny of writing across the curriculum in all subject books
- conferencing with pupils and discussions about what they have written.
- regular moderation events within school across phases, key stages and with external bodies such as other schools, moderating teams from the STA and Local Authorities.