

# WRITING Curriculum



## Intent

At Butler's Hill Infant and Nursery School, our intent is that children will:

- be excited and motivated to write and express themselves
- are explicitly taught vocabulary
- be taught phonics, spelling and grammar that is contextualised within the art of writing
- practise composition through oral activities before their transcription becomes fluent.
- get the practice they need to acquire fluent transcription skills (spelling and handwriting), which is the foundation for their progress in writing.
- Carefully chosen activities enable pupils to practise and apply their spelling knowledge and segmenting skills to use the content they have been taught and to do so without having their working memories overloaded.
- Children are confident to plan, write, check, edit, re-draft and publish as required with the focus on using and applying the mastery skills they have been taught.

## Implementation

### Nursery

Nursery children start with colourful semantics as a high proportion of our intake, have speech language and communication delay (see current baseline data). Colourful semantics is a targeted approach to support children with their sentence building and to teach them about sentence structure. The approach teaches a child the different parts of a sentence by giving each one a colour and an associated question prompt. Using colours and questions for each element of the sentence means that children can be supported in two main ways:

- Help them to understand different questions by associating them with a colour, e.g. when you're reading a book ask 'who's the story about?' and show an orange question prompt so that they understand what kind of answer you're looking for.
- Help children to build up different sentences by combining different colours together. The colour coding system makes the approach very visual meaning that it works well for children whose visual skills are a strength.

### Foundation 2 and Key Stage 1

From September 2024 we adopted 'Pathways to Write' as our chosen scheme of work, as it provides a strong mastery approach to vocabulary, reading and writing as its core methodology, in line with EEF recommendations.

In Reception, alongside the Pathways to Write approach, there is also a clear focus on applying the taught phonics from the ELS scheme as well as practising and applying letter formation. Transcription skills are carefully modelled during shared and guided writing and then children are given the opportunity to sit at tables to apply what they have learnt in their own writing, for a range of purposes. Writing opportunities are also provided in the areas of provision for independent application of skills.

Pathways to Write follows a Mastery-Learning model. Key skills are taught and repeated; there are multiple opportunities throughout each unit to use and apply the skills until they can be mastered fully. Within each sequence, there are many opportunities for incidental short- burst writing with an extended written outcome built up to by the end of each unit.

Within each unit, there are new age-related skills for pupils to work on and master through a variety of activities and writing opportunities. By limiting the number of skills the units contain, pupils can really master their writing techniques and build the confidence they need to be effective writers.

The scheme is built around 'key' areas – Gateway, Mastery and Feature Keys:

- **Gateway keys** are the skills that should have been previously taught.
- **Mastery keys** are the main skills that will be focused on throughout the unit. These relate to National Curriculum objectives for the year group.
- **Feature keys** are the features of the writing genre that is the outcome for each unit. Each set of Feature keys has the same structure – vocabulary of the genre, how sentences and tenses are used and the overall structure of each one.

### Education evidence EEF: Mastery learning

Mastery learning works through designing units of work so that each task has a clear learning outcome, which pupils must master prior to moving on to the next task. Core components of the mastery approach that schools should be careful to implement include:

- Effective diagnostic assessment to identify areas of strength and weakness
- Carefully sequencing topics so that they gradually build on foundational knowledge
- Flexibility for teachers on how long they need to spend on any topics
- Monitoring of pupil learning and regular feedback so that pupils can master topics prior to moving to the next
- Additional support for pupils that struggle to master topic areas

### The process towards mastery

Gateway (*application of previously taught skills*)



Pathway (*teaching new skills*)



Writeaway (*application of newly taught skills*)

### **Spelling**

- Key Word spellings are taught daily within our ELS phonic scheme.
- In Key Stage 1 half termly spellings of Common Exception Words (CEW) and Harder to Read and Spell words (HRS) are sent home and tested each half term. To ensure this is appropriate, to the child they will not move on to the next set until the previous set is generally secure to ensure a mastery approach is consistent.
- Year 2 children follow the ELS spelling programme in line with the phonics taught in the rest of the school for consistency.

### Writing Intervention

- Children working below age related expectations will be supported through a well-structured and purposeful intervention which supports the work that is being carried out in the classroom ensuring children can take back what they have learned and apply it.
- Phonic intervention also follows our chosen phonic programme ELS and is delivered by well trained Teaching Assistants who have been supported by The English Hub.
- Differentiated phonic groups – whole school
- Targeted Handwriting groups where applicable

### Handwriting

At Butler's Hill we follow the Achieving Excellence in Handwriting programme for the teaching of handwriting throughout school. This follows a teaching sequence of letters and letter families, use of line guided paper and clear consistent terminology.

The approach progresses through the school with an emphasis being placed on the use of consistent language. Specific handwriting displays in each classroom will reflect the consistency of language and approach used throughout school. Handwriting will be carefully modelled by their teacher using the classroom visualiser and children have specifically designed writing books to apply this. Where appropriate these line guides are used across all subjects including phonics. Our aim is no child will be held back from achieving age related expectations or Greater Depth because of their handwriting alone.

### Marking and Feedback

At the start of the school year teachers will share / re-cap on the marking policy and the feedback children will expect to receive as part of their learning in writing. This will include the symbols they will see and the purpose of the colour that has been used in their books. These symbols will be shared at the start of the lesson and will be mainly linked to the Mastery Keys they will be learning. Children will be shown that the learning objective (with symbols) will be at the top of each piece of work. In EYFS and KSI oral feedback is key and most marking will be done with the children. The teacher will indicate this with VF / Verbal Feedback stamper.

Sharing the marking policy with the children will include:

- Review of the symbols used to assess and mark their work, these will be primarily based on the learning intentions shared at the start of the lesson (likely to be the mastery or gateway keys).
- Green pen of the symbol will indicate they have achieved or shown evidence of the learning intention in that piece of work.
- Pink pen will indicate they have a target to practice – this could be grammatical, a year group Common Exception Word (CEW), Harder to Read and Spell Word (HRS) or a specific letter orientation. Children will be expected to practice this three times on that piece of work.
- When a target has been achieved three times, in subsequent pieces of work, it will be ticked and dated.
- All comments will be in black and will be appropriate to the age of the child.

- The unit outcome or assessed pieces will be marked in greater detail and time given for children to review this.
- An essential part of the lesson will be the plenary where the teacher will share a piece of work with the class, and this will be known as 'live marking' where the process is explicitly shared with children – and can also be used as an opportunity for peer assessment. This will be a positive experience for the child (who may be anonymous) to have their work shared. There will be elements that have been done well and help for their next steps or their target. Children will not perceive the pink pen as negative, simply that they haven't achieved it yet – linking in with our Growth Mindset and Metacognition approach to learning.

### Staff Continuing Professional Development to support children

- Half termly staff meetings to moderate writing assessment (also with family of schools)
- Weekly phonic training sessions created in conjunction with The English Hubb
- Termly observations and feedback.
- Marking policy crib sheets in children's books to ensure consistency across the school
- Termly book looks to monitor progress of groups of children and ensure marking policy is being adhered to.

## Impact

The impact of the approach we use to teach writing is that children at Butler's Hill Infant and Nursery School see themselves as successful authors. They are able to speak more articulately using the vocabulary they have learned and this impacts the vocabulary choices used in their writing. Through the implementation of our writing curriculum, our children are developing a passion for writing as evidenced by the children's engagement, stamina and enthusiasm for writing.

Our purpose in the teaching of writing is that by the end of Key Stage 1, we have empowered our children with the skills needed to take them onto the next stage of their education. Our goal is to ensure our children's cultural capital is at the forefront of all we do. We aim to equip them with essential knowledge that children need to prepare them for their future success. It is essential that children receive the best possible start to their early education; writing is critical to this success. By the end of Year 2, children will have embedded the phonics they learned in Year 1, learned further complex spelling patterns and rules, and begin to apply those in their writing. Developing fluent and clear handwriting will further enhance the writing process.

See Long Term plans for texts and overview