



Writing Policy

Our School Vision

At our school we celebrate our faith diversity and provide a safe environment where our children are happy to learn. We aim to inspire future generations of our school and community to become lifelong learners.

Objectives:

At Thornhill Lees Infant and Nursery School, we strive:

- To create and maintain a stimulating environment for children to experience and explore writing at their own pace with confidence and enjoyment.
- To maintain writing as a valued, high profile activity which will allow children to access the whole curriculum.
- 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.

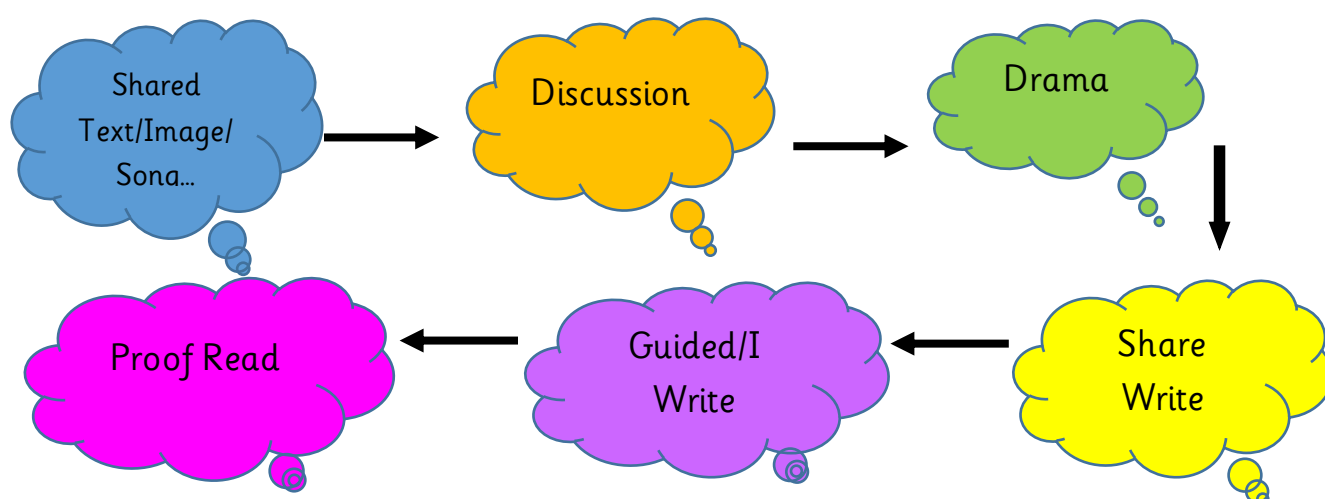
Teaching and Learning Styles

At Thornhill Lees Infant and Nursery School we use a variety of teaching and learning styles in English lessons, as recommended by the New Curriculum for English. Our principal aim is to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding in English. During English lessons children experience a whole class shared oracy, reading or writing activity, a guided group or independent activity and a whole class plenary to review progress and learning. They have the opportunity to experience a wide range of texts, in a variety of genre, and use a range of resources such as dictionaries.

Writing

At Thornhill Lees Infant and Nursery School, we provide writing opportunities for all genres of writing and we always make sure the children understand that their writing has a purpose.

Following on from whole school training in Writing by the LA, we devised a 'Whole School Writing Approach' which each Year Group follows.



What does writing look like at Thornhill Lees?

Two Year Olds

We provide lots of opportunities for children to develop their shoulder, arm and hand muscles as well as to explore mark making, following the 'Launchpad for Literacy' skills steps.

Nursery

Fine motor activities are planned for Nursery such as 'Squiggle while you Wiggle'. Nursery have incorporated weekly writing/mark making books. Nursery follow the Launchpad for Literacy skills steps. We read, discuss and model stories and then encourage the children to draw characters or make marks with links to the theme within the session.

Reception

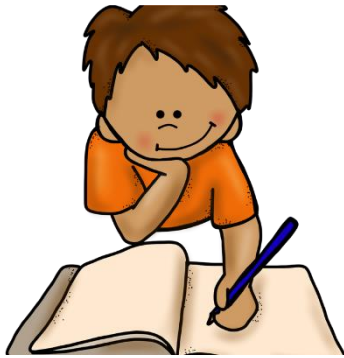
Reception consolidate on the physical and comprehension work with the formal introduction of Phonics as previously mentioned. Children engage in daily phonics sessions where they practice formation, reading and recalling letter sounds and tricky words. There are lots of opportunities for the children to apply this formal practice within the provision and this is well supported by the adults. Launchpad for Literacy skills steps continue to be followed.

Key Stage One

In Key Stage 1 all writing has a purpose and the children are made aware of this, sometimes it maybe them who actually suggest the purpose. Children begin at the same starting point in their writing and are encouraged to exceed. Additional support is provided for those children who require it, including language support. The writing sequence usually starts with a stimuli, discussion, role play/drama, a plan, then the children write and finally proofread and amend.



Spelling is a crucial element of the curriculum and at Thornhill Lees Infant and Nursery School there is great emphasis on the correct spelling of key words and common exception words as well as other words in the children's writing. Spellings are taken from the Little Wandle programmes and content which is linked to weekly teaching. Word banks are available for the children to independently access and in Year 2, the children learn how to use a dictionary to help them spell new words. There are Little Wandle Sound/Word Walls in each classroom which display spelling rules taught in Phonics and other words that the children find challenging to spell for them to independently access during writing activities.



Every classroom throughout school has a Writing Provision Area which the children can access independently. They are stocked with a variety of writing equipment, paper and card etc. Reception and Key Stage 1 have a specific purpose as well as opportunity for independence too.

Handwriting

At Thornhill Lees Infant and Nursery School, the correct formation of letters is taught right from Nursery. Handwriting is a skill which affects written communication across the curriculum. Children need to be able to write with ease, speed and legibility.

Formation phrases are used from the 'Little Wandle' programme and are used right from Nursery.

Our aim at Thornhill Lees Infant and Nursery School is to support the children in developing a style of handwriting that is clear, joined and fluid. It is of high priority within the new English curriculum. Children will be encouraged to always take pride in their work.

Although there are many opportunities to practise handwriting across the curriculum, we also provide weekly focus lessons for teaching and revising these skills in Key Stage 1. The frequency and length of these lessons will depend on the year group. We teach to the needs of the children and link handwriting to the Phonics being taught or to reinforce the correct spelling of key words.

Five stages are identified and these form the basic organisation of the scheme:

1. Readiness for writing: gross and fine motor skills leading to letter formation (Foundation)
2. Beginning to join (Lower KS1)
3. Securing joins (Upper KS1, Lower KS2)

Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

The curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage states that at the end of Reception children should be able to hold a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. The New Curriculum for Key Stage 1 handwriting and presentation states that in order to develop a legible style, children should be taught:

- How to hold a pencil/pen
- How to write left to right, top to bottom
- Where to start and finish letters correctly
- How to write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters
- How to put regular spaces between letters and words
- How to use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.
- How to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined.

Posture: Children should be taught the importance of sitting upright and correctly on their chair, with their feet on the floor.

Pencil Grip: Children should be encouraged to use a tripod grip. Children should be taught how to place their pencil on the table in front of them with it pointing towards their bodies and then pick it up and allow the pencil to fall back into the tripod grip. Some children find this aspect challenging therefore finger gym is a focus especially in the Early Years and pencil grips are used where necessary.

Early Years



Children take part in multisensory activities to develop their fine and gross motor skills and recognition of patterns, for example, to form letters with their index finger in sand or shaving foam. Children with a poor pencil grip will take part in strengthening fine motor activities.

Children should then begin to learn how to correctly hold a pencil using a tripod grip, then how to use a pencil to form recognisable letters.

They should be given a range of mark making/handwriting opportunities to develop their handwriting to their full potential.

Key Stage 1



Children will continue to develop fine and gross motor skills with a range of multi-sensory activities. Handwriting should be discussed within and linked to phonics sessions. Teachers and support staff continue to guide children on how to write letters correctly, using a tripod pencil grip. Children will begin to learn how to join letters in Year 1 and continue to practice this skill in Year 2.

Provision for left handed children

All teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed children and should make appropriate provision.

- Children are encouraged to move their paper not their hand
- Children should be positioned so that they can position their paper to their left side
- Left handed children should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space
- Extra practice with left to right exercises maybe necessary before the child can write left to right automatically.

Teachers are aware of the fact that it is very difficult for left handed children to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Teachers demonstrate to left handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

Capital Letters

Capital letters stand alone and are not joined to the next letter. Children must practice starting each sentence with a capital letter as well as writing names and not join the capital letter to the subsequent letter. This should be modelled by the teacher at every writing opportunity.

English Curriculum Planning

English is a core subject in the curriculum. We use guidance from the New Curriculum, end of year expectations and our knowledge of the children to plan an effective English curriculum. At every opportunity we plan to deliver units that 'best fit' in with the topic we are exploring for example, in Year 2 Non-chronological reports are taught when learning about Animals. The English planning is reviewed at planning meetings and end of term review meetings to identify successes and ways of developing it even further. Each year group leader is in charge of this.

The teaching and learning of English is planned for by unit at weekly planning meetings. On the plans, links to the new curriculum are made, key skills are identified, clear learning objectives are set, the main teaching point activity is explained, differentiated learning steps are identified, a plenary and a short evaluation of the session is included. Once the planning has been agreed by all staff, they then take charge to annotate it to the needs of the children in their class.

Inclusion

Some children may require more support with their handwriting and teachers of these children, whose handwriting is limited, by problems with their fine motor skills, should liaise with the SENCO to develop a programme designed for the individual child.

We aim to assist all children to develop a fast, legible style of handwriting. It is vitally important that children learn the correct letter formation as soon as they have the desire to write – children who begin by forming their letters incorrectly are reinforcing bad habits, which are virtually impossible to eradicate. The children finish each letter with a ligature, in preparation for joined up handwriting, which is introduced at the appropriate time. Upper case letters are introduced systematically.

Younger children and those less confident are encouraged to refine their motor skills using sand, finger paints, a variety of media as well as regular practise of patterns and letter formation. Children in Nursery are given their own name book where they practise weekly forming letters of their name using the correct sequence of movements while using the 'Little Wandle' formation phrases. This book then follows them into Reception where the name writing practice continues on a more daily basis. They are taught to hold their pencil correctly, to consider writing from left to right, starting and finishing letters correctly, letter size, shape and spacing. Year 2 children are taught to develop legible handwriting in both joined up and printed styles.

Contribution of English to teaching in other curriculum areas

The skills that children develop in English are linked to, and applied in every subject of our curriculum. The children's skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening enable them to communicate and express themselves in all areas of their work in school. Such skills are identified on medium and short-term planning.

Maths

English contributes significantly to the teaching of Maths in our school. Children in the Foundation Stage develop their understanding of number, pattern, shape and space by talking about these areas with adults and other children. Children in Key Stage 1 meet stories and rhymes that rely on counting and sequencing. They are encouraged to read and solve a range of word problems recording clear jottings to show the process they have gone through to reach their answer. Children in Key Stage 1 are asked to explain and present their work to others and they communicate mathematically through the developing use of precise mathematical language.

Computing

The use of ICT enables children to use and apply their developing skills in English in a variety of ways. In the Foundation Stage, children use ICT to help develop speaking and listening skills as well as reading through the use of reading programmes as well as the use of the interactive smartboard. Children in Key Stage 1 use a range of ICT apparatus including ipads to support them in their English learning for example, in Year 1 when learning about instructions, children take photographs of each other preparing for PE to then sequence and write an instruction for. In Year 2 children word process information posters and leaflets communicating what they have learned in a particular topic.

PSHE

English contributes to the teaching of PSHE and Citizenship. We encourage children to take part in class and group discussions on topical issues. In their science work they talk about conditions that improve their health and about rules for keeping them safe around school. Planned activities within the classroom encourage children to work together and respect each other's views.

SMSC

The teaching of English develops skills through which our children can give critical responses to the moral questions they meet in their work. Their understanding and appreciation of a range of texts brings them into contact with texts from a range of cultures. The organisation of lessons allows children to work together and gives them the chance to discuss their ideas and results.

Equal Opportunities

At Thornhill Lees Infant and Nursery School we teach English to all children whatever their race, class, disability or learning needs. English forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education for all children. Teachers provide learning opportunities matched to the needs of children with learning difficulties and those still developing the English language. Work in English takes into account the targets set for children on their ANP. Teachers provide help with communication and English through:

- ✓ Using texts children can read and understand.
- ✓ Using visual and written materials in different formats.
- ✓ Using ICT, other technological aids and recorded materials.
- ✓ Working in small groups led by the teacher/ETA.
- ✓ Sharing the focus text prior to the lesson with specific children.

Multicultural

Whilst acknowledging the necessity of competence in Standard English, we do not intend to regard any child socially, culturally or linguistically disadvantaged because of their language, nor must any child feel that their mother tongue is of less value than English.

We aim to ensure:-

- A variety of cultures are reflected in both fact and fiction books
- All books in school should avoid cultural bias
- All teachers have a regard to the linguistic variety present in school
- Parental and community involvement is a valuable source of information and assistance.

Parental Involvement

We aim to foster an interactive, supportive relationship with parents as their child progresses through school.

We aim to do this by:-

- Making the policy available in school for reference
- Consulting parents individually regarding specific matters of policy relating to their child
- Valuing parental contributions in all aspects of language development – talking to their child, listening and responding appropriately, reading and sharing books, encouraging enjoyment and understanding, helping their child become fluent composers – using correct letter formation and spellings
- Asking parents to discuss with teachers/record how their child has read at home.

- Having weekly 'Parent Time' with focused groups each Tuesday mornings encourage parents to come in and work with their child on a specific focus e.g. writing, reading, spelling.

All new parents are invited into the school prior to their child's admission and are made aware of the policy. All parents are provided with an appropriate copy of the School Prospectus and a Welcome Booklet which includes a handout showing correct letter formation. A Welcome Booklet has been written for each Year Group highlighting expectations.

Assessment and Recording

At the end of an English lesson, the teacher writes a short evaluation of the lesson which identifies any misconceptions the children have or specific skills that need revisiting. These then inform the following lesson.

Writing

When a child has completed a piece of writing, the class teacher marks it using the Whole School Marking Policy. Where appropriate a next step is identified or a question is asked to clarify the children's understanding. At the beginning of the next lesson, the children are encouraged to read the teacher's comment and then using a green pen, the children then complete the set task.

The assessment of each child's writing is an on-going process throughout the year where teachers assess the children's writing against the New Curriculum and Framework Statements. Each child in Key stage 1 has their own Writing Assessment record which is regularly updated when a child has done a 'good' piece of independent writing. Each child's writing achievement is not just from work done in English but includes cross curricular writing. Each child has an Independent Writing book and this along with their individual writing record is used to track their progress throughout the year. Termly moderation meetings are held to assess a selection of children's writing to ensure there is a shared understanding of requirements. This can either be done in year groups or as a whole school. The SLT also take samples of children's books in on a regular basis to monitor content, quality and presentation across each year group.

Teachers carry out a Baseline Assessment of the children within the first two weeks of them starting the year group and then at the end of each term, where they assess the children against the standards and report which standard they are working *within*. These are closely monitored by the year group leaders and SLT. Where a child is identified as not making progress, they are then placed in an Intervention Group to give them more support in developing key skills.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of the standards of the children's work and the quality of teaching is the responsibility of the Writing coordinator, EYFS and Key Stage co-ordinator and the Senior Leadership Team. The coordinator also supports colleagues in the teaching of writing, keeping up to date in current developments in the area, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject. The coordinator is in charge of devising the action plan for the subject and regularly reviewing it.