

Peters Hill Primary School

Writing Policy



1. Introduction and Rationale:

Purpose and importance of the policy.

The purpose of our Writing Policy is to establish a unified and effective approach to teaching writing, ensuring consistency and high standards across the school. Writing is crucial not only as a core academic skill but also as a medium for creative expression and critical thinking. This policy provides clear guidelines for teaching strategies, assessment, and progression, ensuring every pupil receives the support they need to develop their writing skills. By highlighting the importance of writing in the curriculum, this policy aims to cultivate confident, articulate, and proficient writers who can succeed both academically and personally.

Overview of the school's vision for writing.

Our school envisions a writing programme where every child feels empowered to express their thoughts, ideas, and creativity with clarity and confidence. We strive to create an engaging and supportive environment that nurtures a love for writing, encouraging pupils to become enthusiastic and reflective writers. Our aim is to equip children with the skills and strategies needed to write effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences, fostering both academic achievement and personal growth. By prioritising excellence in writing, we aspire to develop independent thinkers who can communicate their unique perspectives and contribute meaningfully to the world around them.

2. Aims and Objectives:

Goals for writing across the school.

- Develop strong foundational writing skills, including grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- Encourage creativity and originality in writing, fostering a love for storytelling and expression.
- Ensure pupils can write confidently and effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- Integrate writing across the curriculum to enhance learning in all subject areas.
- Provide regular opportunities for pupils to practise and refine their writing through structured and free-writing activities.
- Use assessment and feedback to guide and improve pupil writing skills continually.
- Cultivate a supportive environment where mistakes are viewed as learning opportunities, promoting resilience and growth.
- Engage parents and carers in supporting their children's writing development at home.

How writing supports overall literacy development.

- Enhancing reading skills through improved comprehension and critical thinking.
- Strengthening vocabulary by encouraging the use of diverse and precise language.
- Developing grammar and punctuation understanding, essential for clear communication.
- Encouraging coherence and organisation in expressing ideas, aiding oral and written communication.
- Fostering analytical and reflective thinking, important for academic and personal growth.

3. Curriculum and Planning:

Outline of the writing curriculum.

The writing curriculum is designed to develop pupils' skills progressively, focusing on key areas such as handwriting, spelling, grammar, and composition. It begins with foundational skills in EYFS, where pupils explore mark-making and basic letter formation. In Key Stage 1, pupils build on this by learning sentence structure, punctuation, and basic grammar rules. By Key Stage 2, the focus shifts towards more complex grammatical structures, diverse vocabulary, and writing for different purposes and audiences. Pupils are encouraged to plan, draft, edit, and evaluate their writing, fostering a deeper understanding of the writing process. Throughout all stages, there is a strong emphasis on exposure to a variety of genres and text types to enrich pupils' writing experiences.

Reception:

Introduction to letter formation and phonics.

Simple sentence construction.

Encouraging creative story-telling through pictures and words.

Key Stage 1:

Building on phonics knowledge.

Developing sentence structure and basic punctuation.

Writing short stories, descriptions, and simple non-fiction texts.

Key Stage 2:

Expanding vocabulary and grammatical accuracy.

Writing in various genres: narratives, reports, persuasive texts, and poetry.

Developing editing and revising skills.

Encouraging writing for different purposes and audiences.

Sequencing of writing skills from EYFS to Year 6.

Sequencing writing skills from Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to Year 6 is crucial for developing confident, proficient writers. In EYFS, the focus is on fine motor skills, mark-making, and developing an understanding that writing communicates meaning. Moving into Key Stage 1, pupils learn basic sentence construction, simple punctuation, and phonics application. By Key Stage 2, emphasis shifts to more complex structures, cohesive paragraphs, varied sentence types, and the effective use of grammar and punctuation. Throughout, pupils should experience a variety of text types and genres, progressing from simple narratives to persuasive and explanatory texts. Continuous assessment and responsive teaching ensure that individual needs are met, allowing each pupil to build on their skills systematically.

EYFS:

Mark making and letter formation.

Recognising phoneme-grapheme correspondences.

Writing simple words and sentences.

Year 1:

Building on phonics for spelling.

Basic punctuation (full stops, capital letters).

Writing short narratives and simple non-fiction texts.

Year 2:

Expanded sentences using conjunctions.

Enhancing punctuation (commas, question marks).

Writing short stories, recounts, and instructions.

Year 3:

Developing paragraph structure.

Using a wider range of conjunctions and phrases.

Writing narratives, reports, and basic persuasive texts.

Year 4:

Varied sentence openings and complex sentences.

Further punctuation (speech marks, apostrophes).

Writing descriptive pieces, explanations, and letters.

Year 5:

Using cohesive devices (e.g., adverbials) for clarity.

Advanced punctuation (colons, brackets).

Writing multi-paragraph texts, including narratives, arguments, and formal letters.

Year 6:

Refining writing for different audiences and purposes.

Mastery of punctuation and grammatical structures.

Producing well-structured essays, narratives, and reports.

Emphasis on editing and revising.

Integration of writing across other subjects

Integrating writing across primary subjects enhances pupils' learning by showing the relevance of writing in various contexts. Encouraging pupils to write reports in science, reflective journals in history, or explain their reasoning in maths helps them see writing as a valuable tool for communication and understanding. Cross-curricular projects, like creating a brochure for a geography topic or composing a narrative based on a historical event, make writing tasks engaging and meaningful. This approach not only improves writing skills but also deepens subject knowledge by requiring pupils to organise and articulate their thoughts clearly.

PSHE:

Writing in PSHE can help pupils express their thoughts and understand key concepts deeply. Start with reflective writing where children record their feelings and thoughts about various PSHE topics, such as friendships, emotions, or social issues. Encourage letter writing activities, like drafting letters to their future selves or to a friend discussing a PSHE topic. Use scenario-based writing to tackle issues like bullying or peer pressure, letting pupils explore solutions creatively. Implement research essays on topics such as mental health or global citizenship.

Physical Education:

Incorporating writing into PE can enhance students' understanding and engagement. Encourage pupils to maintain fitness journals, documenting their progress, setting goals, and reflecting on their activities. Assign research projects on sports history, famous athletes, or the science behind exercise. Integrate analysis tasks, such as writing reports on game strategies or evaluating their performance. Use creative writing prompts related to sports experiences or the emotions tied to winning and losing. Lastly, involve students in writing instructional guides or health and nutrition articles.

Music:

Integrating writing in Music lessons can be an enriching experience for students. Encourage pupils to write reflective journals about their musical experiences, expressing emotions and thoughts about pieces they play or listen to. Use songwriting activities to combine creativity with literacy skills. Have students write biographies of composers and performers to build research and report-writing abilities. Music reviews and critique essays can help hone analytical skills. Consider incorporating cross-curricular projects where students create presentations or write articles connecting music to history, culture, or technology.

Design Technology:

In DT, writing can enhance pupils' understanding of the design process and their projects. Encourage students to maintain design journals, documenting their ideas, sketches, and reflections. Assign research projects on famous designers, historical periods, or materials. Use instructional writing where they create step-by-step guides for their projects. Promote evaluation reports where students critique their work and suggest improvements. Collaborative group reports on projects can also build teamwork and communication skills.

Religious Education:

In RE, writing can facilitate deep reflection and understanding. Encourage pupils to keep reflection journals on their thoughts about different beliefs and practices. Assign research essays on various religious traditions, figures, or festivals. Use creative writing to imagine and describe a day in the life of a person from a different faith. Facilitate debate essays where students explore different viewpoints on ethical or moral issues.

Science:

In Science, writing can support critical thinking and comprehension. Encourage pupils to write lab reports to document their experiments and analyse results. Assign research projects on scientific topics or influential scientists. Use explanatory essays where students describe scientific processes in their own words. Implement argumentative essays on contentious scientific issues, fostering debate and critical assessment.

History:

In History, writing can help pupils engage with past events critically. Encourage them to write diary entries from the perspective of historical figures. Assign research papers on significant events or time periods. Use analytical essays to compare different historical interpretations. Foster debates through argumentative essays on controversial historical issues. Implement narrative writing where they describe events as if they're storytelling.

Geography:

In Geography, writing can enhance understanding of different cultures and physical landscapes. Encourage pupils to write travel journals describing various countries as if they're visiting. Assign research projects on geographical phenomena or environmental issues. Use comparative essays to analyse different regions or ecosystems. Foster reports on fieldwork to document observations.

Mathematics:

Integrating writing in maths can deepen pupils' understanding. Encourage them to maintain maths journals, documenting problem-solving processes and reflections. Assign explanatory essays where they describe mathematical concepts in their own words. Use real-world problem scenarios asking pupils to write solutions step-by-step. Foster research projects on the history of maths or famous mathematicians.

Art:

In Art, writing can help pupils articulate their creative processes and thoughts. Encourage them to write artist statements explaining their artwork. Assign reflective journals where they document their artistic journey. Use comparative essays to analyse different art movements or artists. Foster critiques of famous artworks.

Computing:

Integrating writing in Computing can enhance pupils' understanding of technology. Assign project reports where they document their coding projects. Encourage blogging about new technologies or programming languages. Use tutorial creation where pupils write guides for peers. Foster reflection logs on problem-solving strategies.

4. Teaching Strategies:

Approaches to teaching writing.

Approaches to teaching writing can vary widely but generally involve a blend of explicit instruction and creative practice. Explicit instruction focuses on teaching the fundamentals, such as grammar, punctuation, and structure, often through direct lessons and modelling. Writing workshops provide opportunities for pupils to draft, revise, and edit their work, receiving both peer and teacher feedback. Scaffolding techniques, like graphic organisers, help pupils organise their thoughts and structure their writing effectively. Incorporating writing across the curriculum ensures pupils understand the relevance and application of writing skills in various contexts. Encouraging a love for writing through engaging, real-world tasks and providing choices in writing topics can significantly boost motivation and confidence. There are various approaches to teaching writing effectively:

Modelled Writing:

Demonstrating the writing process by thinking aloud as you write.

Shared Writing:

Collaborating with the class to create a piece of writing together.

Guided Writing:

Providing targeted support in small groups to develop specific skills.

Independent Writing:

Allowing pupils to apply skills in their own writing projects.

Writing Workshops:

Combining mini-lessons with sustained writing and peer review.

Use of Visuals:

Employing images and videos to inspire creative writing.

Feedback and Editing:

Emphasising the importance of revising and improving drafts.

Use of modelled, shared, guided, and independent writing.

Utilising modelled, shared, guided, and independent writing approaches creates a robust framework for developing pupils' writing skills. Modelled writing involves the teacher demonstrating writing strategies, showcasing the thought process aloud. Shared writing lets pupils contribute ideas collectively, fostering a collaborative learning environment. In guided writing, small groups receive focused support tailored to their needs, enabling personalised feedback and targeted skill development. Ultimately, independent writing encourages pupils to apply their learning autonomously, consolidating their skills. This balanced approach ensures that pupils build confidence and competence in writing at their own pace.

Using all four approaches can be quite effective

1. Modelled Writing:

Show your thinking process by writing in front of the class.

Discuss choices of vocabulary, sentence structure, and grammar.

2. Shared Writing:

Collaboratively create a piece of writing.

Discuss and make decisions together, with you guiding the process.

3. Guided Writing:

Work with small groups on specific writing skills.

Provide targeted support and immediate feedback.

4. Independent Writing:

Allow pupils to write independently, applying learned skills.

Encourage exploration of personal interests within writing projects.

Grammar, punctuation, and spelling instruction.

A robust approach to teaching grammar, punctuation, and spelling (GPS) involves explicit, systematic instruction combined with practical applications. Starting with foundational concepts in the early years, pupils learn key grammatical structures, punctuation marks, and spelling rules incrementally. Lessons should be engaging and interactive, incorporating dialogue and real-world examples. Regular practice through varied activities, such as editing exercises and writing tasks, helps solidify understanding. Assessments and feedback pinpoint areas for improvement, ensuring pupils can apply GPS skills confidently across all writing contexts. Additionally, embedding GPS within the broader curriculum supports reinforcement and deeper learning.

A robust approach to teaching grammar, punctuation, and spelling involves:

Explicit Instruction:

Teach specific grammar rules, punctuation marks, and spelling strategies.

Use examples to illustrate correct usage.

Integration into Writing:

Encourage pupils to apply these skills in their writing tasks.

Provide regular prompts and reminders.

Games and Activities:

Use interactive activities like grammar games, spelling bees, and punctuation puzzles.

Daily Practice:

Incorporate short, daily exercises for continuous practice and reinforcement.

Peer Review:

Have pupils check each other's work to spot and correct errors.

Use of Technology:

Leverage educational apps and tools that focus on grammar and spelling.

5. Assessment and Monitoring:

Methods for assessing pupils' writing.

Assessing pupils' writing can be approached through a variety of methods. Formative assessments such as writing journals and draft submissions provide ongoing insights into pupils' progress and areas for improvement. Summative assessments like end-of-term projects or standardised tests measure cumulative skills. Rubrics and checklists offer clear, objective criteria for evaluating specific elements of writing, while peer and self-assessment encourage pupils to reflect critically on their own and others' work. Conferencing with pupils allows for personalised feedback and goal setting, ensuring that each pupil understands their strengths and areas to focus on. Together, these methods provide a comprehensive picture of writing proficiency and guide future instruction.

Use of formative and summative assessments.

Both formative and summative assessments play crucial roles in the educational process. Formative assessments are ongoing and provide real-time feedback, helping teachers to adjust instruction and support pupils as they learn. Examples include quizzes, class discussions, and observational notes. These assessments inform instructional strategies and identify areas where pupils need additional help. On the other hand, summative assessments evaluate pupil learning at the end of an instructional period, such as through exams, final projects, or standardised tests. They measure cumulative knowledge and understanding, providing an overall picture of pupil achievement and instructional effectiveness. Used together, these assessments create a balanced approach that promotes learning and accountability.

Tracking progress and identifying next steps for learning.

Tracking progress and identifying next steps for learning are essential components of effective teaching. Regular monitoring through various assessments helps to pinpoint pupils' current levels of

understanding and skill. By maintaining detailed records, teachers can identify trends, strengths, and areas needing improvement. This data informs personalised learning plans, ensuring each pupil receives targeted support. Setting clear, achievable goals based on assessment outcomes helps keep pupils motivated and focused. Additionally, involving pupils in the process by sharing progress and discussing next steps fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility for their learning journey.

6. Differentiation and Inclusion:

Strategies for supporting diverse learning needs, including SEND.

Supporting diverse learning needs in writing, including SEND, involves a blend of targeted approaches and adaptive resources. Personalised writing goals ensure that each pupil works at an appropriate level, with progress monitored closely. Visual aids such as graphic organisers can help plan and structure writing, reducing cognitive load. Assistive technology like speech-to-text software supports pupils with motor or language difficulties. Frequent scaffolding—breaking tasks into manageable steps—builds confidence gradually. Peer support and collaborative projects enable sharing of ideas, promoting a supportive environment. Regular, constructive feedback focuses on strengths while addressing areas for improvement.

Techniques for challenging more able writers.

Challenging more able writers involves pushing their boundaries with advanced techniques and stimulating tasks. Extension activities such as crafting complex narratives or exploring different genres can deepen their skills. Encourage creative autonomy by allowing them to choose their own writing topics and styles. Higher-level critique and analysis of literature can refine their critical thinking and inspire sophisticated writing techniques. Mentorship opportunities, such as peer tutoring, allow them to share their expertise while learning new perspectives. Encouraging publication efforts, whether in school magazines or external competitions, provides real-world challenges.

7. Writing Environment:

Creating a conducive classroom environment for writing.

Creating a conducive classroom environment for writing involves fostering a space that inspires creativity and focus. Flexible seating arrangements allow pupils to find comfortable spots that suit their writing styles. Quiet zones minimise distractions, while inspirational decor like literary posters and a word wall can spark ideas. Having a well-stocked writing centre with varied materials (different paper types, writing tools, and prompts) encourages exploration. Incorporate regular writing time into the schedule, promoting a routine that values focused, uninterrupted writing periods. Positive reinforcement and constructive feedback build confidence and motivation.

Use of writing displays, word walls, and resources.

Using writing displays, word walls, and resources can significantly enhance pupils' engagement and learning in writing. Writing displays showcase exemplary work, celebrating achievements and providing inspiration. Word walls offer a dynamic resource of frequently used words, thematic vocabularies, and tricky spellings, aiding in vocabulary development and spelling accuracy. Interactive elements, like magnetic word boards, allow pupils to experiment with sentence construction. Accessible resources, such as graphic organisers, thesauruses, and writing prompts,

empower pupils to enhance their writing skills independently. These tools collectively create a rich, supportive environment that fosters creativity and growth.

8. Parental Involvement:

Encouraging parental support in writing development.

Encouraging parental support in writing development can significantly boost pupils' progress and confidence. Regular communication with parents, through newsletters or parent evenings, can offer insights into the writing curriculum and ways they can assist at home. Suggest at-home writing activities, like journaling or storytelling sessions, to foster a supportive environment. Sharing resources and tips, such as reading together or providing constructive feedback, can guide parents in nurturing writing skills. Moreover, involving parents in celebrating achievements, like showcasing their child's writing at home, reinforces positive reinforcement.

Communication with parents about writing progress and strategies.

Communication with parents about writing progress and strategies is essential for supporting pupils' development. Regular updates through parent-teacher meetings or digital platforms/emails keep parents informed about their child's achievements and areas for improvement. Sharing specific strategies, such as encouraging daily writing at home or discussing books read together, provides parents with actionable steps to support their children. Transparent communication about goals and expectations ensures parents understand the curriculum and how they can play a part. Celebrating successes and providing constructive feedback fosters a collaborative approach, making parents feel integral to their child's learning journey.

9. Professional Development:

Ongoing training for staff to enhance writing instruction.

Ongoing training for staff to enhance writing instruction is vital for maintaining high teaching standards and ensuring pupil success. Professional development sessions focused on current pedagogical trends, such as creative writing techniques or digital storytelling, can invigorate teaching practices. Workshops on differentiation and inclusive strategies equip teachers to meet diverse pupil needs more effectively. Regular peer observations and mentorship programmes foster a culture of continuous improvement, encouraging teachers to share successful approaches and innovative ideas. Access to up-to-date resources and collaborative planning sessions helps in refining lesson plans and integrating new techniques.

Sharing best practices and resources among staff.

Sharing best practices and resources among staff can profoundly impact teaching quality and pupil outcomes. Regular staff meetings and professional learning communities provide platforms for teachers to exchange successful strategies and innovative approaches. A centralised resource hub, such as the online drive, ensures easy access to useful materials, lesson plans, and assessment tools. Encouraging peer observations and collaborative lesson planning fosters a supportive environment where teachers can learn from each other. Celebrating teaching successes and recognising contributions also boosts morale and motivation.

10. Review and Evaluation:

Regular evaluation of the writing policy's effectiveness.

Regular evaluation of the writing policy's effectiveness is crucial for continuous improvement and achieving desired learning outcomes. Periodic reviews and assessments of the policy help identify strengths and areas needing refinement. Gathering feedback from teachers, pupils, and parents provides valuable insights into practical implementation and impact. Data from writing assessments and progress tracking inform necessary adjustments to the policy. Engaging staff in reflective discussions and action research projects encourages a culture of inquiry and responsiveness.

Processes for making necessary updates and improvements.

Updating and improving the writing policy involves a systematic, inclusive approach to ensure it meets current educational needs. Collect feedback and data from multiple sources, including assessment results, surveys, and classroom observations. Analyse this information to identify areas for enhancement. Hold consultation meetings to discuss proposed changes and gather further input from staff. Implement a trial period for new strategies, followed by further review to assess their impact. Finally, document the updates and provide comprehensive training sessions to ensure all staff are clear on the revised policy. The policy is to be reviewed annually and approved by the Full Governing Body

11. Equality and Equity

At our school, we commit to ensuring equality and equity in our writing curriculum. Every pupil, regardless of background, has access to high-quality writing opportunities. We differentiate our instruction to meet the unique needs of each pupil, providing tailored support where necessary, ensuring that all pupils, irrespective of starting point, can achieve the highest standards. By fostering an inclusive environment, we celebrate diverse voices and perspectives in all writing activities, promoting fairness and a sense of belonging for every pupil

Equality in education means providing every pupil with the same opportunities to succeed. We are dedicated to creating an inclusive environment where all pupils, regardless of their background, abilities, or circumstances, receive equitable access to resources, support, and teaching. We strive to remove barriers to learning, ensuring that each pupil has the chance to achieve their fullest potential and feel valued within our school community.

Policy Reviewed – September 2024

Approved by the Full Governing Body –