



Writing Policy

Early Years

Policy Updated	February 2022
Policy Agreed	
To be Reviewed	As Required
Written by	M. Speakman
Signed	
Designation	

The Teaching of Writing

The teaching of writing is an essential part of our school curriculum. As a school, we have adapted a full school approach towards to teaching of writing use the scheme 'Pathways to Write' from The Literacy Company.

Pathways to Write

Pathways to Write is a proven methodology built around units of work which develop vocabulary, reading and writing skills through the mastery approach. The units, for use with pupils from EYFS to Y6, provide clear detailed lesson plans and resources, linked to high-quality texts to ensure engaging and purposeful English lessons. Effective teaching strategies to challenge greater depth writers are included within each unit of work.

Key elements of *Pathways to Write*:

- Six detailed units of work for each year group from EYFS to Year 6
- Fully resourced sessions inspired by engaging texts
- Progressive development vocabulary, reading and writing skills through the mastery approach
- Links creatively to the wider curriculum
- Challenges greater depth writers

As a school, St Malachy's begin to use the Pathways to Write scheme in Reception. The six units provided for each year group are each based on an engaging class text, and they also have a class novel to support. The novels are used as an additional resource for class teachers to read daily to the class, to help to foster an enjoyment of writing as well as reading.

Each unit is based around three sets of 'Keys'. Gateway Keys, Mastery Keys and Feature keys.

Gateway keys link to prior objectives that have either been taught in previous year groups, or earlier within the academic year – this enables teachers to not only develop their understanding of the wider curriculum, but also ensures that previous years objectives are recapped and retaught where necessary.

Mastery keys are the current year group's objectives that are being taught within the writing unit. Skills are taught and then the children are given the opportunity to use their new skills within a piece of writing. The children receive the opportunity to write daily within their literacy lessons, and the taught skills are then assessed at the end of the unit once the children have completed their final piece.

Feature keys are genre specific and progressive throughout year groups. Progression is mapped out on a whole school overview to ensure that writing genres are developed.

Writing interventions

In addition to the full class teaching of writing, St Malachy's also uses an intervention programme, 'Pathways to Progress'.

Pathways to Progress is a writing intervention programme designed to be delivered in addition to pupils' English lessons. The programme is predominately aimed at pupils who were working just below expected in summer term assessments and those who have fallen behind due to disruption to learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is designed to be facilitated by a teacher, teaching assistant or tutor and provides targeted CPD each half term for the key skills to be taught. The *Pathways to Progress* intervention programme has been designed following recommendations from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) on running high-quality structured interventions (*Improving Literacy in KS1* - 2020, *Improving Literacy in KS2* - 2017).

Currently, teaching assistants in each year group are facilitating the programme and the sessions run 3x per week for 20 minutes a session.

Writing in Early Years (Nursery and Reception)

Communication and language sit at the heart of writing – everything we do around building language and supporting communication feeds into the writing that our children do, even at the very earliest stages of their mark-making.

We play around with language, using alliteration, nursery rhymes, and listening activities to build the phonological awareness that is so vital as a basis for learning phonics.

The more vocabulary the children have, the better placed they will be to become fluent writers. We look for every opportunity to introduce them to new words when they are ready for them, by modelling new ways of describing the world through interesting topics and a vibrant and stimulating environment, both inside and outside.

Physical development

The development of fine and gross motor skills is critical for the act of writing. Everything we do around physical development in our setting feeds into the aspect of writing, because when children are active they are developing core strength, dexterity, and eye-to-hand coordination.

It is tempting to view writing as something that is done in a static way, seated at a desk. However, it is often more useful for physical development to create opportunities for making marks that are not desk-based at all.

For instance, sticking paper on the underside of a desk so that the children can write upside-down, hidden in a den, or using easels, flipcharts and clipboards. Children are also given the opportunity to use different mediums and tools to develop shoulder, arm and wrist strength.

At the end of Nursery, our aim is for every child to be able write their own name and begin to label using their phonetical knowledge.

Once the children have transitioned to Reception, they then move onto the Pathways to write scheme, which is then followed straight through to Year 6.

Phonics Teaching in relation to writing

At St Malachy's writing is also taught through a scheme called 'Read, Write Inc.' This scheme is introduced to the majority of the children in the Spring term of the nursery class. However, as the children are streamed (that is, grouped according to their phonic knowledge) some children may work with the reception children. Phonics work is taught for 30 minutes a day. Phonics are taught from nursery to Year 2, however, as we recognise that children's learning develops at different rates, some children may still be working on their phonics in KS2.