



**Spring 2019**

This policy should be read in line with The National Curriculum in England: primary Curriculum  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-primary-curriculum>

**Ruth Kyle**

## **The National Curriculum in England (2014)**

### **The Importance of Teaching English**

The National Curriculum (2014) states that English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.

At John Clifford School, we believe that the ability to write with confidence and accuracy is an essential life skill. Writing is a complex process that draws upon more than handwriting and spelling. It is the ability to effectively communicate ideas, information and opinions through the printed word in a wide range of contexts. Successful writers understand the social function and characteristics of writing in order to use different genres appropriately. They shape their writing to suit audience and purpose. Writing also requires the writer to understand and accurately apply the conventions of syntax, spelling and punctuation. We aim to equip children with the skills necessary to achieve this, throughout the curriculum.

### **Aims and Purposes**

The National Curriculum for English (specifically writing) aims to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the written word. It aims to provide children with opportunities and the ability to:

- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and a knowledge of linguistic conventions for writing
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas.

Our aims are for all children at John Clifford to:

- Write with confidence, clarity and imagination;
- Understand and apply their knowledge of phonics and spelling;
- Understand how to write in a range of genres (including fiction, non-fiction and poetry), using the appropriate style, structure and features;
- Plan, draft, revise and edit their own work, and learn how to self and peer-assess against the success criteria;
- Develop a technical vocabulary through which to understand and discuss their writing;
- Develop their imagination, creativity, expressive language and critical awareness through their writing.

We aim to develop, through our teaching of writing, the following attitudes:

- Curiosity and interest;
- Pleasure and thoughtfulness;
- Critical appraisal;
- Independence;
- Confidence;
- Perseverance;
- Imagination.

We believe that good writers:

- enjoy writing and find the process creative, enriching and fulfilling
- read widely, recognise good writing, and understand what makes it good
- are aware of the key features of different genres and text types
- learn about the skills of writing from their reading and draw (consciously or unconsciously) upon its models in their own work
- have 'something to say' (a purpose) and know how to say it for the specific audience
- know how to plan and prepare for writing
- know how to develop their ideas
- make informed choices about what they are writing, as they write (for example, about vocabulary, grammar, text structure, etc.)
- understand how to reflect upon, refine and improve their own work
- can respond to the constructive critique of others.

### **Equality of Access and Differentiation**

Writing is taught within the guidelines of the school's Equal Opportunities Policy.

- We ensure that all our children have the opportunity to gain writing knowledge and understanding regardless of gender, race, class or ability.
- Our expectations do not limit pupil achievement, and assessment does not involve cultural, social, linguistic or gender bias.
- We aim to teach writing in a broad global and historical context, using the widest possible perspective and including the contributions of people of many different backgrounds.
- We value writing as a vehicle for the development of language skills, and we encourage our children to talk constructively about their life experiences.
- In our teaching, writing is closely linked with all the foundation subjects.
- We recognise that writing may strongly engage our gifted and talented children, and we aim to challenge and extend their learning.

### **The Teaching of writing**

At John Clifford School, writing is taught and celebrated in a range of ways; it is taught across the school and across a range of subjects. We aim, wherever

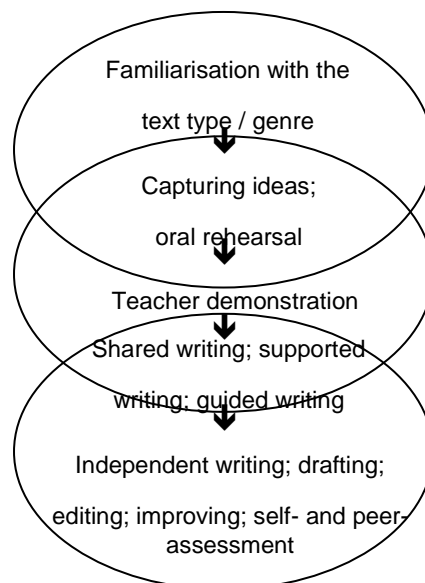
possible, to create cross-curricular writing opportunities as we believe that, in order for children to see themselves as successful writers, they need to be involved in writing for a purpose.

We follow the National Curriculum (2014) which ensures that a range of genres are covered, including narrative (e.g. extended stories, stories by the same author, myths and legends, adventure stories and traditional stories), non-fiction (e.g. persuasive texts, non-chronological reports, information texts, recounts, reports and letters) and poetry (e.g. rhyme, nonsense rhymes, shape poems, descriptive poetry and poems that follow specific structures).

Genres are taught and learnt considering the:

- audience
- purpose
- form

Throughout each unit, the links between reading and writing are made explicit – we read as writers and we write as readers. The progress throughout each unit of work shows the transition between reading as writers (focusing on structure, characterisation and language features etc...) to writing as readers (word play, description, composition, planning, editing, revising etc...). The main structure adopted for the learning journey is below:



Integral to the process of writing is speaking and listening. 'Talk for writing' is used as a strategy to enable children to articulate their thoughts, retell stories, orally create new stories and orally rehearse what they are going to write and

then re-read what they have written. This underpins and runs alongside the writing process.

Writing is taught in a range of ways:

### **Modelled Writing**

The teacher speaks out loud their thought processes as a writer. They model strategies in front of the children, communicating the strategies being used. Teachers may model writing skills such as punctuation, rehearsal, proof reading, editing, word selection, sentence construction and paragraphing.

### **Shared Writing**

This is a collaborative approach in which the pupils contribute their ideas and thoughts for the teacher to write. The teacher models and teaches specific writing skills and there is the opportunity for discussion to choose the most effective or suitable ideas.

### **Supported Composition**

The children work in pairs to provide the next sentence of the text. This may follow from the modelled or the shared writing process.

### **Guided Writing**

Pupils are grouped according to gaps in learning, which may sometimes be (but will not always be) by writing ability. The teacher or other adult works with the group on a carefully selected task appropriate to that group's needs and targets. This will focus on a particular aspect of the writing process rather than writing a complete piece.

### **Independent Writing**

Children are given opportunities to apply their understanding of the text type in their own writing. They are encouraged to plan, draft, write, edit and assess their work, applying the skills they have learnt throughout the unit of work on that particular genre.

The teaching and learning of writing varies across the age range in school. In the early years, emergent writing is encouraged both inside and outside the classroom, through the use of different writing materials, including felt tipped

pens, crayons, chalk, sand, magnetic letters, big brushes, water, paint and computers. Writing opportunities are available in all areas of the environment such as the role-play, construction, mud kitchen and challenge areas. Different contexts for writing are made available to the children through the use of postcards, menus, invitations, labels etc. Each week, the children are encouraged to complete a piece of writing whilst working with an adult. Children are given immediate verbal feedback and praised for what they have achieved. Alongside this, children take part in regular activities to encourage and develop gross and fine motor skills necessary to write in a legible script.

Daily phonics lessons build their phonic and spelling knowledge to enable them to sound out words and spell high frequency words correctly. Children throughout the year groups have spellings to learn relevant to their age, and these focus on high frequency words or a particular spelling pattern.

As children progress through the school, they are given many opportunities to write independently and to apply the skills they have learnt and practised in shared and guided writing. Wherever possible, writing is made meaningful by being planned for a specific purpose or in response to a particular experience.

Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation is planned and taught as an integral part of each unit of work. The objectives are carefully matched to the unit of work to enable them to be taught and learnt within a meaningful context.

### **Planning and Evaluation**

All teachers are responsible for planning, evaluating and teaching writing. Where the planning load is shared across a team, members of the team are expected to differentiate for the needs of the children in their group/class. The National Curriculum stipulates the expectations which form the long-term plan from which the teachers write medium-term plans to achieve balance and coverage over a term or half term. The more detailed weekly, short-term planning will focus on the teaching process. A planning proforma is used throughout the whole school to focus learning expectations.

Class teachers meet regularly to ensure continuity of provision and moderation in terms of expectations and outcomes across the year groups.

### **Assessment, Recording and Reporting**

Assessment is used to inform the planning and teaching of writing. We assess using the John Clifford writing tracker and, in Years 2 and 6, the TAFs.

Assessment against these criteria takes various formats:

- Group or individual tracker sheets to record progress and achievements. Writing levels ('working towards', 'working at' and 'exceeding' age-related expectations) are reported to parents at parents' evenings in October and March and in reports at the end of the school year.
- Success criteria created by the teacher and the pupils during lessons, and used for self and peer-assessment purposes.
- SATs Writing Assessment at the end of Key Stage One (Y2) and the end of Key Stage Two (Y6).
- Weekly spelling tests, generally in the context of a dictation (see SPAG policy).

## **Continuity and Progression**

Continuity and progression underpin the teaching of English. In school, we aim to ensure that objectives and concepts are reviewed and reinforced before further extension takes place. The transfer from Reception to Year 1 as well as from Year 2 to 3 is monitored closely. Assessment data and incidental information is moderated and passed on to the relevant teacher who ensures that the transition between Key Stages is as smooth as possible. Data uploaded on O'Track is used to inform new class teachers of pupils' achievements and their levels in reading and writing. Communications between class teachers, identify children's next steps in learning. Similarly, the transfer from Year 6 to Secondary school involves the passing on of such information.

## **Links with Other Subjects**

Although the majority of writing **instruction** is likely to take place during daily English lessons, at John Clifford, we are committed to providing the children with opportunities to **apply** their skills in other contexts, such as Topic, Science and RE.

## **The Role of the Writing Leader**

At John Clifford School, the Leader for writing is Ruth Kyle. Her role within school in leading writing is to:

- Inspire others to teach writing in a practical, engaging and challenging way.
- Monitor the effectiveness of writing within the school.
- Support teachers in their planning and strategies for classroom management.
- Keep up to date with any new, relevant government documents and disseminate new information.
- Ensure continuity and improvement of the teaching and learning of writing across the school by monitoring and professional development opportunities.
- Ensure that the writing assessment across the school is consistent, accurate and to judge whether data is in line with national averages.

## **Parental Involvement**

Parents and carers are encouraged to be actively involved in their children's writing at all ages by encouraging them to write for a range of purposes such as shopping lists, diaries, notes, letters, cards, stories etc...

## **Risk Assessment**

Teachers assess all activities and resources used in lessons in terms of the possible risk they may pose to children and adults. Any activity or resource deemed a possible risk is highlighted in red on teacher's planning and advice for best and safe practice is shared with children and adults taking part in the lesson. All lessons are planned in line with the school's General Risk Assessment Policy.

This policy was written in Spring Term 2019 and will be reviewed Spring Term 2020.