

The Writing Curriculum at Didcot Primary Academy

A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. The writing programmes of study are constructed into two major themes: composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing) and transcription (spelling and handwriting). Our broad and balanced curriculum provides our children with the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to develop into well rounded, informed individuals. High quality text forms the core of our English curriculum providing our children with opportunities to read and write across a range of contexts and for different purposes and in response to a variety of exciting first-hand experiences.

Phonics

We use Read Write Inc. Phonics (RWI) in Reception and Year 1 to give children the best possible start with their literacy. Children learn sounds in school which help them to read and write. Sounds are taught in a specific order together with rhymes to help children form the letters correctly and instantly recognise sounds ready for blending. As part of the Read Write Inc. programme, children will learn to write the letters/letter groups which represent the forty-four sounds. They will learn to write words by saying the sounds and graphemes which will lead them to build sentences orally using adventurous vocabulary. This will start with simple sentences and develop towards more complex ones by the end of the programme.

Writing curriculum – Composition

In Years 1-6, each half term consists of at least one narrative and non-narrative unit. Poetry will be placed throughout the year. Narrative units tend to last longer than non-narrative and poetry units but will differ in length depending on the content, final written outcome and length of the term. This is laid out in Appendix One.

We use a detailed progression of skills as a basis for our English lessons. This has been broken into eight separate areas that encompass all the major parts of writing. Enriching texts are used for their ability to deepen their appreciation and engage with a variety of writers. A range of genres have been chosen that are used to apply these skills in a variety of contexts. The children have an English lesson every day with these high-quality texts supporting the skills needed to develop. Texts can be used to support more than one genre. They are exposed to a wide range of adventurous vocabulary which in turn they then incorporate in their writing. Within each genre and skill, year group specific features are taught in sequence, to develop a steady progression through the curriculum as well as review and consolidate skills from before. Children write with a purpose and audience in mind to focus their choice of vocabulary and sentence structure. The range of genres have been carefully mapped to develop skills assessed each term.

Each class has an English ‘working wall’. The working wall is a crucial element in the teaching of writing as it acts as a customised model for the children’s independent work and is an indispensable tool in the scaffolding of their learning. It ensures that children always have a reference point to jog

their memory should they need it to support them if they are uncertain about how to apply a specific skill. As well as this, teachers create their own text specific 'WAGOLL' (What A Good One Looks Like) to model to the children how to include the identified features in their own writing. WAGOLLs can be shared daily to illustrate distinctive features expected.

Poetry

Each class has an environment and an ethos where children have the opportunity to listen to, share and see a range of poems in a range of circumstances. Poetry books and anthologies are found on bookshelves and whole class guided reading sessions often analyse specific poetic texts. During the year, poetic forms are planned and taught, from Viking Kennings to Cinquains. Children are encouraged to participate in both spoken and written poetry competitions. A whole school poetry house competition is completed in the Autumn term. This gives specific time and space for children to rehearse and polish performances before presenting to an audience.

Spoken language / oracy

Fostering children's oracy skills plays a pivotal role in enhancing their confidence and overall academic achievement. Classroom discussions are a cornerstone of this development, providing a platform for students to articulate their thoughts, engage in debates, and actively participate in shared learning experiences. These exchanges not only nurture communication skills but also instil essential qualities and attitudes necessary for becoming active and informed citizens in a global society.

Classroom practices actively contribute to oral language development. Targeted reading aloud and book discussions with young children create a foundation for language proficiency. Explicitly extending pupils' spoken vocabulary ensures a rich and diverse range of expressions. Structured questioning techniques are employed to enhance comprehension across the curriculum, encouraging students to think critically and articulate their understanding.

In the Autumn term, the inter-house poetry slam offers every child the opportunity to explore, learn, and perform poetry in front of their peers. In addition, over the year there are opportunities for every child to be involved in an assembly and/or performance with an audience. Reception, Year 2 and Year 6 put on a performance each year.

Grammar

The English National Curriculum has an overview of the grammatical terms that needs to be introduced per year. We use the correct terminology as children need to become familiar with it. New content in grammar is taught explicitly and then regularly referred to in normal teaching throughout the year. Due to our skills-based approach, teachers will constantly refer to the grammar knowledge children have developed in previous years before layering added content on top. As well as this, each year group has an 'Every Time We Write' criteria. This gives generic statements based

on spelling, punctuation and grammar that all children should adhere to, whether in their English book or any writing across the curriculum as laid out in Appendix Two. When planning writing units, teachers will specifically look at the grammar relevant to the writing style. Although non-statutory, children and staff have access to an additional appendix which has a breakdown of all grammatical terms, with examples, that children could know. Children have an online game-based application that can help them practise their grammar understanding.

Assessment

When assessing independent writing, we use writing objectives. These give an indication of skills that children can apply into their writing, grouped into handwriting; planning, composition and editing; grammar and punctuation. These objectives develop each term, so that by the end of the year, children should be confidently applying a majority of these skills into their writing.

Writing curriculum - Transcription

Spelling

Spelling is based on the National Curriculum respective year group levels. Within each stage there are weekly objectives and spelling lists that develop a steady progression through the curriculum as well as review and challenge lists to extend vocabulary. For each week's spelling list, a programme of starters focusing on the spelling 'rule' (i.e. adding –s or –es on plurals) is used, that reviews similar rules, explicitly teaches the new rule, allows the children to practise it in a range of contexts and then assesses their understanding of the rule. This programme is coupled with an online platform, allowing children to embed their newly learned skills by practising and applying the rules.

Handwriting

Good handwriting is an essential skill in the quest to spell and write fluently, confidently and competently. A joined handwriting style links kinaesthetic 'muscle memory' with the relationship between the sounds of our speech and the letter shapes, letter groupings and whole written words. The ability to write neatly can raise self-esteem and provides a motivating factor in the production of written work. The style is taught as separate letters at first – not letter strings – and all the letters with their diagonal lead-in joins are taught to proficiency and automaticity before starting to join the letters into words. We use an online programme called 'Letter-join' which is a regular whole school handwriting scheme offering a combination of traditional and digital resources. Lesson Planners are designed so that teachers can use them as a toolkit to support and reinforce the teaching of handwriting and they allow plenty of scope to respond to individual children's needs. Handwriting interventions with LSAs can be completed to catch children up.

Appendix One – English coverage 2023-24

EYFS Overview	Autumn		Spring		Summer	
Nursery	Me and My Community <i>A Great Big Cuddle</i>	Once Upon a Time <i>My Very First Mother Goose</i>	Starry Night <i>Owl Babies</i>	Dangerous Dinosaurs <i>Dear Dinosaur</i>	Sunshine and Sunflowers <i>My Butterfly Bouquet</i>	Big Wide World <i>Handa's Surprise</i>
	- Distinguishes between the different marks they make.		- Gives meaning to marks as they draw and paint. - Ascribes meanings to marks that they see in different places. - Can copy or trace some written letters.		- Gives meaning to marks they make as they draw, write and paint. - Uses some clearly identifiable letters to communicate meaning. - Writes own name. - Hears and says the initial sound in words. Can recognise and write some initial sounds.	
Reception	Let's Explore <i>We're Going on a Bear Hunt</i>	Marvellous Machines <i>On Sudden Hill</i>	Long Ago <i>Here's A Little Poem</i>	Ready Steady Grow <i>Errol's Garden</i>	Animal Safari <i>Handa's Surprise</i>	On the Beach <i>Surprising Sharks</i>
	- Dominant hand, tripod grip, mark making, giving meaning to marks and labelling. - Writing initial sounds and simple captions. - Use initial sounds to label characters/images. - Write CVC words. - Verbal rehearsal of captions/sentences/stories. - Story sequencing		- red words – I, the, love, you, put, to - Write CVC words, CVCC and CCVC words - Create story maps - Write captions, labels. lists and simple sentences		- red words – into, my, like*, do, said - Writing sentences using a range of red words and green words using SS1 and SS2 (some SS3). - Use full stops, finger spaces and capital letters. - Creating and labelling a story map. - Writing descriptive sentences. - Writing instructions. - Writing a letter. - Varying sentence starters	

Year 1		
Autumn	Spring	Summer
Retell Instructions Own story Character description	Recounts (move to where necessary e.g. linked to an enrichment activity such as trip) Informal letter Retell Explanations	Diary Poetry Non-chronological report Settings
Suggested texts		
<p>The Hike by Alison Farrell The Snail and the Whale by Julia Donaldson The Secret Sky Garden by Linda Sarah and Fiona Lumbers Wild by Emily Hughes Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak Once upon a dragon's fire by Beatrice Blue Hummingbird by Nicola Davies Look Up by Nathan Bryan The Last Wolf by Mini Grey The Fox and the Star by Coralie Bickford-Smith</p>		
Grammar		
<p>Adjectives and Rich Language: Use adjectives to describe a noun. Use personal pronouns in place of a noun. Write in first, second and third person. Adverbs: Use time adverbials to create order. Clauses and Conjunctions: Join words and joining clauses using and. Sentences and Punctuation: Compose a sentence orally before writing it. Begin to punctuate sentences using a capital letter and a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark. Tenses: Write in the past and present tense.</p>		

Year 2		
Autumn	Spring	Summer
Retell Instructions Informal Letter Character description Non-chronological report	Poetry Own story Recounts (move to where necessary e.g. linked to an enrichment activity such as trip) Diary	Settings Formal letters Explanations Retell Another recount?
Suggested texts		
The Hike by Alison Farrell Man on the Moon by Simon Bartram The Lonely Beast by Chris Judge The Storm Whale by Benji Davies The Secret of the Black Rock by Joe Todd-Stanton Rapunzel by Bethan Woolvin Beegu by Alexis Deacon		
Grammar		
<p>Adjectives and Rich Language: Use expanded noun phrases to describe and specify.</p> <p>Adverbs: Add suffixes to spell longer words including -ly. Use and understand the grammatical terminology in discussing their writing (adverb).</p> <p>Clauses and Conjunctions: Use subordination (using when, if, that, or because) and co-ordination (using or, and, or but).</p> <p>Sentences and Punctuation: Identify and write sentences with different forms: statement, question, exclamation, command. Learn how to use both familiar and new punctuation correctly, including full stops, capital letters, exclamation marks, question marks, commas for lists and apostrophes for contracted forms and the possessive (singular)</p> <p>Tenses: Re-read to check that their writing makes sense and that verbs to indicate time are used correctly and consistently, including verbs in the continuous form.</p>		

Year 3		
Autumn	Spring	Summer
Retell Instructions Poetry Setting Diary	Own story Biography Informal letters Formal letters Explanations	Own story Non-Chronological Report Character description Persuasive writing Recounts (move to where necessary e.g. linked to an enrichment activity such as trip)
Suggested texts		
Hike by Pete Oswald The Iron Man by Ted Hughes Pebble in my Pocket by Meredith Hooper Pugs of the Frozen North (excerpts) by Phillip Reeve Fly Eagle Fly by Christopher Gregorowski Firebird by Saviour Pirotta		
Grammar		
<p>Adjectives and Rich Language: Compose and rehearse sentences orally (including dialogue), progressively building a varied and rich vocabulary and an increasing range of sentence structures. Choosing nouns or pronouns appropriately for clarity and cohesion and to avoid repetition. In narratives, create settings, characters and plot.</p> <p>Adverbs: Use conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions to express time and cause.</p> <p>Clauses and Conjunctions: Extend a range of sentences with more than one clause by using a wider range of conjunctions, including when, if, because, although.</p> <p>Prepositions: Use conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions to express time and cause.</p> <p>Sentences and Punctuation: Use commas after fronted adverbials. Indicate possession by using the possessive apostrophe with plural nouns. Use and punctuate direct speech.</p> <p>Speech: Use and punctuate direct speech.</p> <p>Tenses: Use the present perfect form of verbs in contrast to the past tense.</p>		

Year 4		
Autumn	Spring	Summer
Retell Settings Character Description Instructions Biography Poetry – Cinquain	Own story Explanation Non-chronological report News/journalistic writing Settings Informal letter	Poetry Persuasive writing Diary Formal letters Recounts (move to where necessary e.g. linked to an enrichment activity such as trip)
Suggested texts		
Hike by Pete Oswald The Lion and the Unicorn and Other Hairy Tales by Jane Ray The Great Kapok Tree by Lynne Cherry Arthur and the Golden Rope by Joe Todd-Stanton Mousehole Cat by Antonia Barber Mouse Bird Snake Wolf by David Almond Phoenix Code by Helen Moss (excerpts)		
Grammar		
<p>Adjectives and Rich Language: Compose and rehearse sentences orally (including dialogue), progressively building a varied and rich vocabulary and an increasing range of sentence structures. Choose nouns or pronouns appropriately for clarity and cohesion and to avoid repetition.</p> <p>Adverbs: Use conjunctions, <u>adverbs</u> and prepositions to express time and cause.</p> <p>Clauses and Conjunctions: Extend a range of sentences with more than one clause by using a wider range of conjunctions, including when, if, because, although.</p> <p>Sentences and Punctuation: Use commas after fronted adverbials. indicating possession by using the possessive apostrophe with plural nouns.</p> <p>Speech: Use and punctuate direct speech</p> <p>Tenses: Use the present perfect form of verbs in contrast to the past tense.</p>		

Year 5		
Autumn	Spring	Summer
Retell Own Story Instructions Persuasive writing Character description Poetry	Explanations Non-chronological report Biography Own Story Setting	Informal letters Formal letters News/journalistic writing Diary Recounts (move to where necessary e.g. linked to an enrichment activity such as trip)
Suggested texts		
<p>Hike by Pete Oswald Adventures of Odysseus by Hugh Lupton Who Let The Gods Out by Maz Evans Falling Out of the Sky poem anthology edited by Rachel Piercy and Anna Wright One Thousand and One Arabian Nights by Geraldine McCaughrean Skellig (excerpts) by David Almond Kai and the Monkey King by Joe-Todd Stanton Varmints by Helen Ward Tom's Midnight Garden by Philippa Pearce I am the seed that grew the tree by F. Waters</p>		
Grammar		
<p>Adjectives and Rich Language: Draft and write by selecting appropriate grammar and vocabulary, understanding how such choices can change and enhance meaning. Evaluate and edit by proposing changes to vocabulary, grammar and punctuation to enhance effects and clarify meaning. Use expanded noun phrases to convey complicated information concisely.</p> <p>Clauses and Conjunctions: Use relative clauses beginning with who, which, where, when, whose, that or with an implied (i.e. omitted) relative pronoun.</p> <p>Sentences and Punctuation: Use brackets, dashes, or commas to indicate parenthesis. Use commas to clarify meaning or avoid ambiguity in writing.</p> <p>Speech: Draft and write by in narratives, describing settings, characters and atmosphere and integrating dialogue to <u>convey character and advance the action</u>.</p> <p>Tenses: Ensure the consistent and correct use of tense throughout a piece of writing. Use Past Perfect Form to mark relationship of time and cause.</p>		

Year 6		
Autumn	Spring	Summer
Retell Own Story Formal letter Informal letter Instructions Poetry Explanation	News/journalistic writing Own Story Diary Discussion Persuasive writing	Setting Character Description Biography Non-chronological report Recounts (move to where necessary e.g. linked to an enrichment activity such as trip)
Suggested texts		
Hike by Pete Oswald The Journey by Francesca Sanna Pax (excerpts) by Sara Pennypacker The Christmas Truce by Carol Ann Duffy Northern Lights (excerpts) by Philip Pullman Shackleton's Journey by William Grill Ice Bear by Jackie Morris Just so Stories by Rudyard Kipling Arrival by Shaun Tan Aesop's fables by Aesop Rabbits by John Marsden		
Grammar		
<p>Adjectives and Rich Language: In writing narratives, considering how authors have developed characters and settings in what pupils have read, listened or seen performed. Evaluate and edit by assessing the effectiveness of their own and others' writing. Evaluate and edit by proposing changes to vocabulary, grammar and punctuation to enhance effects and clarify meaning.</p> <p>Sentences and Punctuation: Use passive verbs to affect the presentation of information in a sentence. Use further organisational and presentational devices to structure text and to guide the reader [for example, headings, bullet points, underlining].</p> <p>Speech: Recognise vocabulary and structures that are appropriate for formal speech and writing, including subjunctive forms. Draft and write by in narratives, describing settings, characters and atmosphere and integrating dialogue to <u>convey character and advance the action.</u></p> <p>Tenses: Ensuring the consistent and correct use of tense throughout a piece of writing.</p>		

Appendix Two – Every Time We Write Years 1-6

Year 1 ETWW

Every time we write, we:

- Form most letters correctly
- Use phonics to spell words
- Write a sentence that others can read
- Use capital letters, finger spaces and full stops

Year 2 ETWW

Every time we write, we:

- Use correct letter size and formation
- Spell words using phonics
- Spell most common tricky words correctly
- Write correct sentences that others can read
- Use capital letters, finger spaces and full stops (? ! if needed)
- Use capital letters for names and I

Year 3 ETWW

Every time we write, we:

- Use correct letter size and formation
- Start at the margin for every line
- Spell words using phonics
- Spell common exception words correctly
- Use correct and consistent tense
- Use conjunctions to extend sentences
- Use capital letters, finger spaces and appropriate end-of-sentence punctuation (.?!)

Year 4 ETWW

Every time we write, we:

- Write digits, capital letters and lower-case letters of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another
- Join some letters with diagonal and horizontal strokes
- Apply spelling rules learned in KS1, including adding prefixes and suffixes (-ed, -ing, -est, -er, -s, -es) correctly
- Spell all KS1 common exception words correctly
- Write structurally correct sentences, extending some with conjunctions
- Use correct and consistent tense
- Use capital letters, commas for lists and appropriate end-of-sentence punctuation (.?!)
- Use apostrophes for contraction (can't) and singular possession (Fred's)

Year 5 ETWW

Every time we write, we:

- Consistently use legible, joined handwriting
- Apply spelling rules learned in KS1, including adding prefixes and suffixes (-ed, -ing, -est, -er, -s, -es) correctly
- Correctly spell all KS1 common exception words and most Y3/4 words
- Write structurally correct sentences, joining clauses through a range of conjunctions
- Use correct and consistent tense
- Use paragraphs to organise ideas
- Use capital letters, commas for lists and appropriate end-of-sentence punctuation (.?!)
- Use apostrophes for contraction (can't) and singular possession (Fred's)

Year 6 ETWW

Every time we write, we:

- Write legibly at speed
- Spell most words correctly: correct form of homophones; all KS1 common exception words; all Y3/4 words; some 5/6 words
- Write a variety of structurally correct sentences, joining clauses through a range of conjunctions
- Use correct and consistent tense
- Use paragraphs to organise ideas
- Use capital letters, commas for lists, end-of-sentence punctuation and apostrophes correctly