

Writing Curriculum Rationale

Intent

At St Peter and St Paul, our writing curriculum is ambitious, inclusive and designed to ensure that all pupils, regardless of their starting points, develop the skills needed to write with accuracy, fluency and creativity. Writing is at the heart of our curriculum because it is essential for communication, self-expression and access to a broad and balanced education.

Our curriculum is structured to:

1. Provide clear progression in sentence construction and grammar, ensuring fluency and accuracy before extended writing.
2. Enable pupils to write effectively for a wide range of purposes and audiences, including narrative, persuasive, informative, and discursive forms.
3. Build cross-curricular links, embedding writing into wider curriculum areas to make learning purposeful and relevant.
4. Meet and exceed the expectations outlined in the National Curriculum, ensuring pupils are well-prepared for secondary education and life beyond school.
5. Foster oracy skills by embedding opportunities for pupils to verbalise their sentences before writing and participate in structured interactions to build confidence and articulate ideas clearly.
6. Support reading by:

Developing cohesive inference

Cohesive inference enables pupils to link ideas by recognising sentence relationships (e.g., cause and effect) and referential ties (e.g., pronouns), fostering deeper comprehension and coherence in reading.

Developing elaboration inference

By linking writing to the wider curriculum, pupils are given further opportunities to enrich their knowledge of the world, which in turn supports their ability to make inferences when reading.

Implementation

Our writing curriculum follows a carefully sequenced approach, underpinned by Ofsted's research review for English, which emphasises the importance of deliberate practice, direct instruction, and modelling.

Sentence-Level Mastery:

A progression of 103 sentence construction steps from Year 1 to Year 6 ensures systematic development of grammar, punctuation, and sentence variety.

Techniques such as sentence combining, shrinking, and expanding are used to embed understanding and develop fluency.

Retrieval practices revisit prior learning, strengthening pupils' ability to transfer skills across different contexts.

Pupils verbalise sentences aloud before writing, refining their ideas and language choices through oral rehearsal.

Weekly Sequence:

Weeks 1–2: Focus on sentence construction and grammar, building towards automaticity. Scaffolded activities and retrieval-based starters ensure all pupils access and retain core knowledge.

Weeks 3–4: Pupils explore high-quality mentor texts, analysing how sentence structures, vocabulary, and grammatical choices create specific effects. Non-examples and reverse engineering are used to deepen understanding. Scaffolded writing, using a teacher model as a guide, helps to bridge the gap between sentence-level writing and the drafting of complete texts.

Weeks 5–6: Pupils independently apply their learning to two extended pieces of writing, progressing through planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing stages. These pieces link to the wider curriculum and the class book being studied. By creating two pieces in close succession, pupils have the opportunity to immediately apply teacher feedback.

High-Quality Resources and Professional Expertise:

Mentor texts are carefully chosen to exemplify the features of each genre, fostering pupils' ability to adapt their writing to purpose and audience.

Teachers are supported through ongoing professional development, equipping them to model writing effectively and scaffold pupils' learning.

Scaffolding for Inclusion:

Strategies such as the Hochman method (e.g., single-paragraph outlines), sentence starters, scaffolded sentence activities, and targeted feedback ensure all pupils, including those with SEND, can achieve success while maintaining high expectations.

Cross-Curricular Integration:

Writing tasks are embedded in wider curriculum areas, such as historical biographies, scientific explanations, and persuasive letters linked to geography topics, ensuring pupils see writing as a meaningful tool for learning.

Impact

Our curriculum is designed to achieve high standards in writing by:

- Securing pupils' accuracy in transcriptional skills (spelling, punctuation, grammar) and developing fluency in sentence construction, as recommended by the Ofsted Research Review.
- Enabling pupils to write confidently for different purposes and audiences, using precise vocabulary and appropriate structures.
- Fostering a culture where all pupils see themselves as writers and speakers, equipped with the skills to express themselves effectively.
- Building pupils' confidence to express their ideas orally before writing, ensuring clarity, coherence, and precision.

Outcomes are evaluated through:

- Regular assessments of sentence-level skills, ensuring mastery before progressing to extended writing.
- Formative assessments during retrieval practices to identify gaps and inform teaching.
- Summative assessments that demonstrate pupils' ability to produce high-quality writing across genres.