



Writing Policy
Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School

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Vision and Aims

At Our Lady and St Joseph, we believe that writing is a vital tool for communication and a key component of academic and personal development. We are committed to developing articulate, confident writers who can express themselves with clarity, creativity and purpose across a range of genres and audiences.

We maintain the highest expectations for all pupils, regardless of starting points and are committed to removing barriers and avoiding limits on progress. Through a carefully structured curriculum and consistent, high-quality teaching, we ensure that every child is challenged and supported to reach their full potential in writing.

Our aims are to:

- Nurture a love of writing through engaging, meaningful contexts and high-quality texts.
- Equip children with the technical skills necessary to write with confidence and fluency.
- Enable pupils to write for a variety of purposes and audiences using appropriate tone, style, grammar and vocabulary.
- Develop reflective writers who can edit and improve their work effectively.
- Embed writing across the curriculum as a tool for thinking, learning and communicating.
- Focus on our transcription skills through targeted handwriting and spelling lessons as per the new writing framework (2025).

Curriculum Vision:

Our curriculum has been meticulously designed by the Writing leader through collaboration with Nicole Gurvidi (from Tower Hamlets Education Partnership) as well as senior leaders across the school. Through our curriculum, we have prioritised a wide-range of topics and stories that strive to represent the multicultural community our school is located in. We hope this inspires and includes all learners and fosters an enthusiasm for writing across the school for both learners and teachers. The majority of our units are THEP units that have been planned and ran by other schools within the partnership. All other units have been planned following the same format and structure to ensure consistency across the school. The curriculum map that we created together includes links to grammar and spelling, ensuring the national curriculum's demands are met and the children are able to practice and use their learned skills. Like other subjects, our writing curriculum is updated and reviewed annually to ensure it continues to link to the wider curriculum and that learners are able to use their learning outside of Literacy lessons to support their writing. Below is an example of what a termly plan looks like within our curriculum map for writing (Year 1 – Autumn Term).

OLSJ Primary School – English Writing Units Suggestion

Year 1 - note in the autumn term there is some flexibility for the units to extend (5 days available)

	Autumn 1			Autumn 2		
	2 weeks 4 days	2 weeks	2 weeks	3 weeks	2 weeks	2 weeks
English Text						
Text genre	Traditional Tale Conquering the monster tale	Familiar Setting Factual description	Familiar setting Losing tale	Traditional tale Wishing tale	Information	Poetry
Writing outcomes	To entertain F: Description of wolf F: Retell of story	To inform NF: Series of descriptions about journeys and places	To entertain F: Retell To inform NF: Description of favourite dish (food)	To entertain F: Character description F: Retell section of story (group writing) F: Own wishing tale	To inform NF: Information writing about rooms we live in NF: Class school information brochure: In Our School on '....' Street/Road	To entertain P: Performance Poetry P: Composing own poems.
Grammar	Simple sentences Past tense Sequencing language Full stops capital letters	Simple sentences Present tense Prepositions Full stops capital letters	Past tense Using 'and' to join ideas Full stops capital letters	Past tense Using 'and' to join ideas Sequencing language Prepositions Full stops capital letters	Present tense Using 'and' to join ideas Prepositions Description Suffix -s or -es Full stops capital letters	Vocabulary development
Spelling	Using Phase 2 – 4 knowledge and known tricky words	Using Phase 2 – 4 knowledge and known tricky words	Using Phase 2 – 4 knowledge and known tricky words	Using Phase 2 – 4 knowledge and known tricky words	Using Phase 2 – 5 knowledge and known tricky words	Using Phase 2 – 5 knowledge and known tricky words

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

In EYFS, writing development is embedded in all areas of learning through purposeful mark-making and emergent writing. Children develop:

- Fine motor control to support handwriting readiness.
- Secure pencil grip and correct letter formation.
- Early sentence construction using finger spaces, capital letters, and full stops.
- Confidence in writing their own name and simple sentences.

This foundational work ensures that children are well-prepared to transition into Key Stage 1 with a secure understanding of the mechanics of writing.

Key Stage 1 (KS1)

In Key Stage 1, pupils build on their early writing skills by engaging in writing that is rich in language and structure. Teachers use:

- High-quality texts and shared writing to model structure, vocabulary, and sentence construction.
- Immersive experiences to engage children with the text type or genre they will be writing.
- A shared writing approach, where children are guided through the writing process before completing an independent piece.

Writing is explicitly taught and closely linked to the reading curriculum to ensure children develop an ear for sentence structure and vocabulary. Spelling is taught systematically through a phonics programme and is reinforced across the curriculum.

Key Stage 2 (KS2)

As pupils progress through Key Stage 2, they develop increasing independence, precision, and sophistication in their writing. They:

- Follow the National Curriculum for grammar, punctuation and composition.
- Explore more complex sentence structures and a wider vocabulary.
- Are taught to adapt their writing for purpose, audience, and form.

Each writing unit typically follows a 3-week cycle:

1. Immersion in the text type or genre.
2. Grammar-focused warm-up activity, evidenced in books.
3. Modelled/shared writing by the teacher.
4. Guided practice and planning.
5. Independent writing task, mirroring the modelled structure and focus.
6. Editing and redrafting, with specific focus on word choice, sentence structure, and overall effect.

In Years 5 and 6, increasing emphasis is placed on accuracy, cohesion, and originality in writing. Spelling is taught explicitly and practised both in school and at home, with formal assessment in Year 6.

Handwriting and Presentation

At Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School, we are very proud of our pupil's handwriting and take particular care in our handwriting style. We use Letter-join's on-line handwriting resource and Lesson Planners as the basis of our handwriting policy as it covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school's agreed handwriting style develops from print, in Early Years and Foundation Stage and Year 1, then moves to cursive from Years 2 to 6. This ensures there is progression in handwriting style from Early Years Foundation Stage through to the end of Key Stage 2.

Pupils are expected to write in pencil until their handwriting is of a consistently high standard. Once this is achieved—and they have demonstrated care in presentation—they may be given a pen license. High standards of presentation are expected across all subjects. At times, pen may be used as a supportive measurement if it enables children to write more legibly or is a useful tool to support progress in writing. At our school, we follow the Letterjoin handwriting scheme and lessons are taught every week. Children are expected to print their writing up until Year 2 where continuous cursive is introduced.

Handwriting is taught regularly throughout the school to support fluency, speed, and legibility. Children practice their handwriting in the mornings, being explicitly taught joins and formation and then their writing is monitored by adults to ensure no mistakes or inconsistencies are embedded. Children should not be practicing handwriting unmonitored.

Spelling

- In KS1 and up to completion of Phonics in Year 2, spelling is taught through a phonics-based programme.
- From this point onward, pupils follow the statutory word lists and spelling rules outlined in the National Curriculum. Spelling is explicitly taught using the Twinkl spelling scheme which works in collaboration with the weekly spellings children do for their homework. In Year 3, children will begin to focus on spelling patterns, prefixes and suffixes (the orthography and morphology of words) before focusing on the etymology as well in Years 4 – 6. Spelling is also supported by our 'new words' section of Shared Reading lessons.
- Weekly spelling lists are sent home, and regular assessments take place.
- Daily practise at home is strongly encouraged, as secure spelling supports writing fluency and clarity.

The Role of Reading

Reading and writing are interdependent. At Our Lady and St Joseph, we place great emphasis on developing children's ability to "hear" what good writing sounds like through reading widely and often.

We actively promote reading both in school and at home. Research consistently shows that the more time children spend reading, the more successful they are as writers. Therefore, regular reading at home is essential and parents are encouraged to support their children by reading with them daily.

Poetry

Each year group engages in at least two poetry units annually. These units aim to:

- Cultivate enjoyment and appreciation of poetry.
- Encourage expressive performance and fluent oral reading.
- Provide opportunities for creative and personal expression in writing.

Children are given creative freedom within these units to explore poetic form, structure, and style.

Editing and Improving

Editing is embedded in the writing process across all key stages:

- In KS1, children focus on capital letters, full stops, and spelling.
- In KS2, pupils critically evaluate their own work and are encouraged to revise word choice, sentence structure, and cohesion.

Dedicated time is provided after each extended writing piece for pupils to edit and redraft their work. This process is valued as a vital step in the development of effective writing.

Feedback and Assessment

- Teachers provide live marking during lessons to offer timely feedback.
- Pupils are given opportunities to respond to feedback and make improvements.
- Writing is assessed against age-related expectations and forms part of termly summative assessments.
- Outcomes inform future planning and targeted support.

Inclusion and Support

Our writing curriculum is inclusive and aspirational. All children, including those with SEND and EAL, have access to high-quality teaching and support to ensure they can achieve success in writing.

We ensure adaptive teaching through:

- Scaffolding and modelling to guide and structure writing tasks.
- Pictorial support and the use of Widgit symbols, which help to minimise cognitive overload and allow learners to focus more fully on the specific writing skills being taught.
- Visual prompts, sentence starters and dual coding vocabulary banks to support language acquisition and structure.
- Targeted interventions, including small group or 1:1 support where necessary.
- Colourful semantics is used as a tool to support some writers across the school. Support on this is given by the writing lead, SEND team and S&L who provided frequent training and support.

For more able writers, challenge is provided through increased independence, open-ended tasks and opportunities for extended writing and enrichment as well as encouragement to use and manipulate good language that they have read in their books.

Monitoring and Review

The Writing Lead is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy. This includes:

- Monitoring planning and moderating children's work.
- Conducting learning walks and pupil interviews.
- Providing training and support for staff.

This policy is reviewed annually or in response to changes in statutory guidance or school priorities.

CPD

CPD is extensive and takes place in a variety of ways. We have specialists (as previously mentioned in section 12) who come in and support both TAs and teachers in implementing Widgit and Colourful Semantics. CPD takes place throughout the year after school on Tuesdays at INSET, mostly led by the writing lead. These usually focus on curriculum, moderation, inclusion and transcription or composition (shared writes etc). The writing lead

SLT and teachers are also supported and trained by Tower Hamlets Education Partnership (THEP) and there is regular communication between the school and THEP to support and monitor the progress of writing in school.

Appendix A: Handwriting curriculum:

EYFS	Nursery	• Children enhance gross motor skills such as air-writing, pattern-making and physical activities • Exercises develop fine motor skills such as mark-making on paper, whiteboards, sensory trays, iPads, tablets, etc. • Children become familiar with letter shapes, their sounds, formation and vocabulary • Children learn to correct sitting position and pencil grip for handwriting	Children write in print	By the end of EYFS, children should be able to form all lower case letters.
	Reception			
KSI	Year 1	• Children continue with gross and fine motor skills exercises • They strengthen letter handwriting, learning and practice • To sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly. • Learn to form digits 0-9 correctly. • Write lower case and capital letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place with a good level of consistency. • Learn where and when to use numerals, capitals and printed letters.	Children write in print however are introduced to cursive in preparation for Year 2 when children are required to start joining their handwriting.	By the end of Year 1, children should be confident in writing all the capital and printed letters, numbers and symbols and start to become familiar with their use.

		Understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.		
	Year 2	- To write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters. - To form lower case letters of the correct size, relative to one another. - To use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.	Children are introduced to cursive handwriting and begin to use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters.	By the end of Year 2, children should now be developing the fluency and speed of their writing.
LKS2	Year 3	- Children continue to use a neat, joined handwriting style with increasing accuracy and speed. - Develop legibility, consistency and quality for handwriting through cross curricular links. - Use dictation to support with handwriting.	To continue to use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and to understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined.	By the end of Year 3, children should have improved fluency in cursive handwriting.
	Year 4	To increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting [e.g. by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant, that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch].	To confidently use diagonal and horizontal joining strokes throughout their independent writing.	By the end of Year 4, children should have practised applying size appropriate handwriting to all

		- Develop legibility, consistency and quality for handwriting through cross curricular links. - To apply size appropriate handwriting to support other areas of the curriculum. - Use dictation to support with handwriting.	writing to increase fluency.	areas of the curriculum whilst maintaining fluency and legibility.
KS2	Year 5	- To increase the speed of their handwriting so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of writing down what they want to say. - To be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, e.g. quick notes or a final handwritten version. - To combine fluent handwriting with other subjects across the curriculum.	To confidently use diagonal and horizontal joining strokes throughout their independent writing in a legible, fluent and speedy way.	By the end of Year 5, children should be producing cursive writing automatically, enabling them to focus on the content of their work rather than the process of writing.
	Year 6	- To write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: - choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters; - choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task. - Children should neatly prepare their handwriting in preparation for KS2 SATS.	To recognise when to use an unjoined style (e.g. for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address or for algebra) and capital letters (e.g. for filling in a form).	By the end of Year 6, By the end of this module, children should be able to adapt their handwriting for a range of tasks and purposes and to create different effects. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes, a final handwritten version, an unjoined style or capital letters.

Appendix B: Spelling curriculum:

Year Group	Core Focus	Spelling Content	Strategies Taught	Expected Outcome by End of Year
Year 3	Morphology & pattern awareness	• Y3/4 statutory word list - Prefixes: un-, dis-, mis-, in-, re-, sub-, inter-, super-, anti-, auto- • Suffixes: -ation, -ly • Homophones (there/their/they're) • Word families based on common root words	• Identify root words • Add prefixes/suffixes accurately • Syllable segmentation • Analogy (linking to known words) • Proofreading routines	Spell most Y3/4 statutory words correctly; apply prefix and suffix rules consistently in independent writing
Year 4	Consolidation & grammatical accuracy	• Continued Y3/4 statutory list • Apostrophes for plural possession • Further homophones • Standard English forms (we were / we was) • Words with unusual spelling patterns	• Morphological analysis • Dictation for application • Editing for spelling during writing process • Use of dictionaries to check accuracy	Accurately spell most Y3/4 words; independently identify and correct spelling errors in extended writing
Year 5	Etymology & advanced patterns	• Y5/6 statutory word list - Silent letters (kn, wr, mb, etc.) • Words ending -able/-ible • Words ending -ably/-ibly • Homophones & near-homophones • Hyphenated words	• Explore word origins (Greek/Latin roots) • Morphology (root + affix meaning) • Use of spelling journals • Dictionary & thesaurus skills	Spell most Y5/6 statutory words accurately; apply knowledge of morphology and etymology across the curriculum
Year 6	Mastery, independence & accuracy at speed	• Secure Y5/6 statutory list - Revision of complex patterns • Words with multiple morphemes - Spelling for precision and effect	• Independent proofreading strategies • Self-correction routines • Personal target lists • Application in sustained independent writing	Fluent and accurate spelling in extended writing; errors are rare and usually self-corrected