



HJS GUIDE TO TEACHING WRITING

A consistent approach

APRIL 2023

PLANNING AND DELIVERY

All classes have a daily English lesson of approximately one hour. One teacher in each year group coordinates the weekly planning, which is adapted by each class teacher to meet the needs of their class and of any individuals within it. The weekly plan should be saved in SharePoint English Planning folder for the Year Group.

Teachers are asked to post a brief outline of what is being taught in the coming week on the General Channel in the Year Group Team so that parents may support learning at home if they are able.

Teachers plan for writing in blocks of two to three weeks. Stimuli for writing may include books, images, plays, videos, animations, visits and cross-curricular links. Over the course of a year children will be taught to write in a range of genres. See [Curriculum Map for English](#).

Planning will include time for children to practise the skills needed to create their final piece. These preparatory lessons may include handwriting, grammar, spelling, language features or terminology. Teachers will model the writing style as part of their teaching sequence. All writing aims to be purposeful and engaging. Pupils will be taught to draft, edit, peer edit and publish as part of the writing process. In the upper school, pupils will be trained to identify and label writing objectives in their own work. Good examples of pupils' writing will also be shared in class, in the entrance hall and in assemblies.

There is an expectation that pupils will be able to transfer their writing skill-set to all other curriculum subjects where written responses are required.

ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

Writing feedback in English books may be verbal or written, formal or informal.

There will also be a minimum of six formally assessed pieces over a year, which will be recorded in 'Orange books.' This book is passed up through the school as a record of a pupil's progress through the key stage 2 phase. However, Year 6 English books contain all their assessed pieces.




Teachers will include time in lessons for pupils to read through their feedback, respond to targets and correct or amend their work. Feedback should support the HJS ethos of helping pupils become independent, resilient and responsible learners through e.g. ELLI and Growth Mindset.

A cumulative feedback sheet will be used by teachers to enable pupils to assess their progress. Teachers will use conferencing time to support children individually or in groups with their writing targets.

MARKING EXPECTATIONS

- Use agreed symbols in the margin to draw children’s attention to mistakes.
- Use agreed symbols above words or phrases to draw attention to specific good examples or words or phrases that need more thought.
- Children use a green pen or pencil for edits or comments on their own or their learning partner’s work.
- When editing with a learning partner, the original author should have “the power of the pen”.
- Teachers use a different coloured pen for their marking and comments. (Different to the colour used for the original work or for children’s edits).
- Feedback, whether written or verbal, should predominantly relate to the learning objective, but will also pick up, to a lesser extent, on basic skills and expectations, such as handwriting, presentation, punctuation and making sense.
- Written feedback should not be overwhelming: be selective.
- Correct spellings may be written in by the teacher if it is not a word the child would be expected to know or easily able to look up.
- If verbal feedback has been given, there is no need to repeat it in written comment.
- Teachers may initial work in books to indicate that they have seen it.
- Use ticks to mark correct answers. Underline or circle or use a dot to indicate wrong answers. Or just don’t tick them.
- Evidence of marking should be evident in both English and ‘orange’ writing books.
- To maximise impact, feedback should be given before beginning the next piece of writing.

SYMBOLS FOR MARKING CHILDREN’S WRITING

VF	verbal feedback
SW	supported work
	weak or inappropriate word
✓✓	a powerful word or phrase
^	insert a good word, phrase or clause
R	repetition
P	punctuation missing or wrongly used
G	grammatical/tenses errors
Sp	spelling mistake
//	new paragraph
??	doesn’t make sense
	next steps
	target

GRAMMAR AND PUNCTUATION

Punctuation and grammar teaching should be embedded within the teaching of writing and reading. Correct terminology should be used by the teacher, so that pupils become familiar with it. Periodically test questions are used to assess ability to recognize and use grammatical structures.

Assessment of a child's level of competence may be drawn from their ability to describe grammatical features in reading matter as well as their ability to employ specific structures in their own writing.

All pupils will be given a Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG) test as part of the end of year assessments.

SPEAKING

Assemblies: every child has the opportunity to take part in a performance each year.

Performance poetry or choral speaking: each year group plans a unit within the yearly plan.

Topic talks: all pupils are expected to present a topic talk in front of their class.

SUPPORT AND CHALLENGE

All pupils are presented with the same writing stimuli, but some pupils will be provided with additional support and expectations of outcomes will be different.

Support can be provided through small group work, teacher conferencing, vocabulary lists, Clicker, Rapid Writing/Reading groups, word processing.

Teachers will amend English plans to support pupils with specific learning difficulties. This will be reflected on pupils' support plans, which are shared with the child and their parents.

SPELLING

Y3 pupils are assessed on entry, as are new entrants to other year groups to provide baseline spelling ages. The Vernon spelling test is given to all pupils at the end of each year. Results are recorded by the SEN Team and distributed to current class teachers to share with teachers for the next year.

Read Write Inc Spelling (RWI) should be taught in every class using the online materials and activities in the pupils' workbooks – at least 3 lessons per week.

At the start of each unit, teachers should inform parents of the spelling rule being taught by posting on the Year Group Team. During the unit, children will choose words they find more difficult to learn and write them in their Spelling Log Book, which they take home to practice. At the end of each unit, teachers test children on a selection of words using that spelling rule.

Teachers need to make sure that they have a routine in place to check that children have spelt the words correctly in their spelling log, and that they know how to mark each others' work accurately.

The "orange words" are words which do not conform to regular spelling patterns, which children are expected to be able to spell by the end of Year 4 or Year 6 in the National Curriculum. Teachers need to introduce these throughout the year – suggested termly lists are saved in [Curriculum/English/Reference Material/Spelling](#).

Children are tested at the start of the year using a [benchmark spelling test](#). This test is based on the patterns taught in Read Write Inc, with the addition of some orange words. Each year group should repeat the benchmark test at end of year in order to establish a progress measure for spelling. Raw scores are entered in a spreadsheet in the [Spelling Assessment](#) folder, which calculates percentages, which are then imported into Insight.

When marking writing, teachers should use the [HJS marking policy](#), and should differentiate between errors and mistakes. Mistakes are words which the children ought to be able to spell, and should be annotated by “sp” in the margin. No other notes are needed: **the child should find the word that is misspelt on that line, find out how to spell it, write it three times in their Literacy Book and then add to their weekly spellings in their spelling log book**. Errors are words which children have not yet learned to spell or would not be expected to know. For clarity, the teacher may write the correct spelling above the word. Corrections are not expected.

SEND

Nessy Reading and Spelling Programme can be used to provide additional assessments and may be used regularly by some children, as directed by the SEN Team. Year 3 will need to revisit Year 2 words before moving on to the Year 3 units.

HANDWRITING

All children are expected to learn to write in neat cursive script. We do not adhere rigidly to a specific scheme. Children who join the school having learnt a different style are not forced to unlearn.

Children must learn that capital letters are never joined, and that some letters are best left un-joined.

In Years 3 and 4, children have dedicated handwriting lessons when they practice letter formation and joining. This may be integrated with thinking starters, may include dictation or copying of content which reinforces learning in any subject, or may be integrated with the learning of spelling.

In Years 5 and 6, teachers model joined handwriting and continue to support children who have not yet mastered a fluent legible style. In all subjects, children should write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed. They should also be taught when it is appropriate not to join, for example when labelling a diagram or writing an email address, and when it is acceptable to use all capitals, for example when filling in a form.

In order to meet the expected standard at the end of KS2, children must be able to maintain **legibility** in **joined** handwriting when writing at **speed**. This does not mean that they have to join their writing in every piece of work. Legibility and speed are more important skills that will equip them for secondary school.

Children use pencils to write until they have demonstrated sufficient fluency to be given a handwriting pen. From Year 5 onwards, all children are encouraged to choose the most appropriate implement for the task.