

Writing Strategy

St Mary's Catholic Primary School 2025-26

Handwriting

- Handwriting is taught through the scheme 'Teach Handwriting' (whole school approach Route B) - <https://teachhandwriting.co.uk/index.html>
- Letters are first taught in print style (version 5)
- Continuous cursive letters are next taught (version 3)
- Letter joins are finally taught (version 3)
- Handwriting is discreetly taught in Reception, Infants and Lower Juniors
- Reception and Infants initially record on printed templates from the scheme
- Lower Juniors record in purple books with handwriting lines.
- Reception and Infants write with pencil
- Year 3 pupils start writing in pencil until they earn their 'pen licence' by the end of the Autumn term
- Year 4-6 pupils write in pen from the beginning of the year
- Year 2-4 pupils have an individual handwriting 'small-step' target which is regularly reviewed within marking

Spelling

- Years 1-6 follow the scheme of work, Spelling Seed, which links weekly spellings to the English unit. Weekly homework is set based on these spellings (Infants – 2 activities, Lower Juniors – 3 activities, Upper Juniors – 4 activities). This scheme also incorporates the statutory spellings.
- The teaching of spelling is timetabled for Year 1-6, half an hour a week. Activities are completed in English books.

English lessons

- All year groups teach units of writing from Literacy Tree, a book-based approach.
- Reception use 'Drawing Club' which utilises Literacy Tree texts. This continues to the end of Autumn term in Year 1.
- Years 1-6 teach English everyday for 1 hour .
- Visual and concrete props are used to promote engagement and discussion as 'hook' activities.
- Live modelling is used by the teacher to demonstrate the writing process.
- Technology is used as a targeted support to reduce secretarial load on some learners. Whiteboard scribing and coloured paper is also used for some SEND learners.

Writing expectations at Reception

Expectations of non-negotiables writing checklist stuck into books.

Writing expectations at Key Stage 1

Expectations of non-negotiables writing checklist stuck into books.

At the end of a writing task, children are reminded to look at their checklist and mark off things they have used successfully.

Feedback and blue highlighter provided around non-negotiable standards

Independent, extended piece of writing to be produced every 2 weeks within the context of Literacy Tree unit, indicated with a capital I at the top.

Writing expectations at Key Stage 2

Expectations of non-negotiables writing checklist stuck into books.

At the end of a writing task, children are reminded to look at their checklist and mark off things they have used successfully from the checklist.

Feedback and blue highlighter provided around non-negotiable standards.

Independent, extended piece of writing to be produced every 2 weeks within the context of Literacy Tree unit, indicated with a capital I at the top (no success criteria). Upper Juniors pupils use PAT at the start of their work for the independent, extended pieces – **Purpose, Audience, Techniques**.

Marking and Feedback

English pieces of work should be acknowledged by the teacher with a tick/stamp/comment.

Where appropriate, up to 3 spellings should be identified (high frequency/ relevant to the child's ability/focus words).

Blue highlighter reserved for 'careless errors' arising from SPAG (and handwriting in Infants and Lower Juniors) ie. incorrect/missing punctuation and capital letters; parts of work that need re-reading – words missing/doesn't make sense/incorrect tense; spelling of high frequency words and words which are subject specific or technical vocabulary; letters not formed or orientated correctly.

'If you see blue, there's stuff to do' slide and 'Checklist time!' in every English lesson presentation.

Display

All classrooms have a writing display board which is placed to the left of the classroom (as the pupils face it).

The writing display clearly evidences the text currently being studied.

The writing display is a 'working wall' so changes/is added to regularly.

The writing display includes a section 'Writing Skills' which provides examples of skills covered.

Books

Provide appropriate line sizes for learners:

Reception and Year 1 — Half page lined, half page blank

Year 2-6 – Full lined pages