



# Straits Primary School

## Writing Policy

### 2025

#### **Contents:**

1. Subject Statement
2. Teaching and Learning in Key Stage 1 and 2
3. Teaching and Learning in EYFS
4. Every Time We Write
5. Vocabulary
6. Phonics
7. Spelling
8. Handwriting
9. Assessment
10. Celebration
11. Monitoring and Review

#### **Subject Statement**

At Straits Primary School, we intend for all of our children to develop as independent, enthusiastic and creative writers. They should be able to write in different genres and choose appropriate language, style and skills for a specific purpose. Their use of grammar and punctuation should show good understanding and therefore enhance their writing. We intend for children to be skilled and creative writers who are able to write for a range of purposes. They should see themselves as 'real writers' and be able to express their thoughts and ideas clearly and creatively using a wide and appropriate vocabulary. We also intend to create writers who can re-read, edit and improve their own writing.

Writing is taught at Straits as part of our wider English curriculum. It is an area of learning in its own right and is taught for 3 lessons a week, but writing opportunities are also integrated into other curriculum areas when appropriate. The key genres and skills for each term are mapped out for each year group to ensure progression and development across school. This ensures that children develop their knowledge of different writing genres, are exposed to fiction and non-fiction texts and 'SPAG' skills develop systematically, with the programme of study for each year group building on previous learning and preparing for subsequent years. Knowledge and skills are informed by and linked to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study to enable achievement of key stage end points.

#### **Teaching and Learning in Key Stage 1 and 2**

The writing curriculum is mapped out to ensure appropriate coverage and progression throughout the school. Appendix 1 shows the genres that are covered in each year group. This ensures a balance between fiction, non-fiction and poetry, whilst also takes into account genres that are more appropriate for particular year groups. Appendix 2 then shows how each unit is broken down into model texts, skills development and final pieces to ensure progression throughout the school.

#### **KS1 & KS2**

Most year groups in Years 1-6 have 12 writing genres to cover within a year and approximately 3 weeks can be spent on each unit. This can be planned and adapted by staff, depending on the lengths of terms and the difficulty of particular genres. Our approach to the teaching of writing centres on four key stages: unpick, skills development, plan and write/edit.

<b>Straits Writing Approach</b>				
<b>Units</b>	12 units per year Approximately 4 units per term. Approximately 9 lessons per unit.			
<b>Quantity of Lessons</b>	1 or 2	4 or 5	1	2
<b>Approach Stage</b>	Unpick	Skill Development	Plan	Write & Edit
<b>Focus Criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hook</li> <li>• Quality writing stimulus</li> <li>• Creation of toolkit (success criteria)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach skills</li> <li>• Explicit modelling</li> <li>• Short burst writing opportunities</li> <li>• Marking and feedback given</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Precise note taking, bullet points, images</li> <li>• Teachers model planning process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One quality piece</li> <li>• Feedback focuses on celebration of effort or skill</li> <li>• Teacher assessment opportunity</li> <li>• Reflection against toolkit</li> </ul>
-----Cohesion & 'Every Time We Write' stages-----				

### **Unpick**

Each writing genre starts with a 'hook' lesson where the children explore an event or activity to launch their new genre. This can be things like a trip, activity set up within school grounds, video, team activity, puzzle/game, mystery box or a message arriving. The start of a unit also includes a quality text – a book or an extract – that can be unpicked by the class throughout their unit. These model texts are chosen and matched carefully to each unit to ensure they model appropriate skills and help develop children's vocabulary and understanding of genres. From this, the children, led by staff, are able to create a toolkit of skills that they need to develop and apply in order to write their own piece of work.

### **Skills Development**

During the second stage of our approach to teaching writing, teachers plan lessons focusing on the different skills children need to develop for each unit. There are opportunities planned in for short burst writing whereby children can practise skills in context (for example, writing character descriptions when practising expanded noun phrases). Teacher modelling is paramount during this stage. During this time, marking and feedback is specific and impactful so that children can learn how to best use and apply these skills, ready for writing their final piece.

### **Plan**

Children are then given time to plan and prepare for their final, extended piece of writing for each unit. The planning process is structured and modelled by staff. Depending on the age of the children and the genre being taught, some choices are given so that the children have ownership of their writing. Wherever possible, a purpose for writing is given to support engagement and enthusiasm.

### **Write/Edit**

One quality piece of writing is completed by each child at the end of each unit of work. Children aim to include the skills that have been developed, as listed on the toolkit for the unit. As children move through school, they are also taught specific editing and redrafting skills. This includes editing

independently and with peers. Opportunities are planned in at the end of writing units for children to edit and redraft their work when appropriate.

## **Teaching and Learning in EYFS**

Parent meetings take place before children join Straits Primary to share examples and encourage mark making and writing in preparation for their educational journey. Upon starting, children have a variety of writing opportunities every day such as beginning every morning with opportunities to write their name, followed by phonics sessions; literacy sessions; application activities; child-initiated time and adulted supported interventions. Through quality first teaching, there is prepared focus on explicit modelling of oral sentence structures, written words and written sentences. This includes multisensory activities to support sound recognition, handwriting and word writing.

Quality texts are used to develop vocabulary and language to develop verbal sentence structure and provide children opportunities to experience rich story telling. Children have access to a range of writing equipment to support their needs, including a selection of paper, ergonomic pencils and tools to develop writing. Our practitioners develop writing ideas at every opportunity to build confidence in pupils so that they want to write words at every opportunity, and the tools and techniques support correct pencil grip and strength building.

## **Every Time We Write**

We have created our own 'Every Time We Write' bookmarks for each year group which are always available and accessible for the children in every classroom. They contain prompts for core skills for each year group but also key reminders of skills that should be embedded and applied from previous year groups. On the reverse side of each bookmark are key spellings for each year group. These are linked to spelling patterns, homophones and words from the statutory spelling lists, but have primarily been chosen by our staff based on their knowledge of our children's needs. Children are encouraged to use these bookmarks in writing sessions but also in other curriculum areas as we believe high levels of writing should be maintained across the curriculum.

## **Vocabulary**

At Straits Primary school, we value the importance of vocabulary by making it a priority in every lesson. As a school, we understand that vocabulary should underpin all aspects of the curriculum. As well as providing opportunities to explore vocabulary through talk, reading and writing, we plan for the explicit teaching of vocabulary within every lesson across the curriculum. We provide opportunities for the children to encounter vocabulary through all conversations and interactions, high-quality texts, independent reading, shared reading, shared writing, listening to others, role-play, direct teaching and studying and sharing fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Through our approach to writing lessons, our children are exposed to high-quality texts with carefully chosen vocabulary which the children are given the chance to analyse, internalise, practise and apply. Children are explicitly taught how to use new vocabulary through discussions, shared writing and short-burst writing opportunities.

We strive to ensure our classroom environments are vocabulary-rich so that the children are constantly exposed to new vocabulary and see it in context. Every classroom has a vocabulary display; this is generally taken from WAGOLLS in English lessons and shared reading texts. Flipchart washing lines are also used throughout school to demonstrate the writing process and model new vocabulary in context and are constantly available for children to refer to during a writing unit. Vocabulary from foundation subjects is also displayed on subject-specific displays. During every topic, in every subject, pupils and parents have access to knowledge organisers which contain a glossary of subject specific words that they can refer to. Subject leaders have set these word lists for every topic; they build in complexity each year so that pupils can build upon their skills and knowledge. Vocabulary is regularly revisited to ensure that it becomes embedded.

From September 2025, every child in Key Stage 2 has a personal vocabulary book. This allows them to store key vocabulary alphabetically so that they can apply it in other contexts. It supports spelling and encourages the use of higher level or technical vocabulary.

## **Phonics**

Early reading skills are taught through a systematic, synthetic phonics programme which is implemented daily in Foundation and Year 1. At Straits, we follow the DfE accredited Essential Letters and Sounds programme (ELS) by Oxford Owl to teach phonics to the whole class. If a child is falling behind, they then have additional small group or 1:1 'keep-up' sessions using ELS interventions (oral blending, grapheme/phoneme correspondence and/or blending for reading). Any children who have not yet fully mastered phonics in Year 1 continue with small group phonics into Year 2. In Year 2, the focus changes from decoding and blending sounds for reading to segmenting sounds for spelling. Children have regular opportunities to revisit, learn, practise and apply their phonics knowledge during sessions using a range of resources and strategies. The ELS spelling sequence programme is further utilised in our approach to develop oral segmenting and blending to enable children to hear all sounds in words, which leads to developing more accurate spelling.

## **Spelling**

In Year 2, those children who did not pass the phonic screening test, continue with daily phonics to revisit Year 1 sounds. As a natural progression from phonics, we use the Read Write Inc Spelling programme, once children are secure in their phonics knowledge, which uses a proven approach underpinned by phonics, fast-paced lessons and an online subscription, to prepare children for the higher demands of the statutory spelling assessments in England. This provides children from Year 2-6 with clear teaching input around specific spelling rules and patterns for their year group through the use of online videos and additional teacher input. They then practise and apply their learning using a variety of activities and games, working in their own Read Write Inc Spelling workbooks. In addition to these sessions, the children then have a weekly spelling test; these generally test the rules and patterns that have been learned in class but also cover some of the words from the statutory spelling lists which are also covered throughout the year.

## **Handwriting**

In EYFS, our children begin developing their handwriting on entry by using 'Dough Disco' daily between September and February (although this may continue longer with some pupils). This focuses on their fine motor development to strengthen hand muscles. During Autumn term, practitioners provide daily opportunities to develop the muscles and hand movements required through both gross and fine motor activities in order to prepare the hands for the process of handwriting. From February, the children progress onto the 'Squiggle While You Wiggle' programme, developing gross and fine motor movements and actions to develop writing posture and pencil control and grip. This programme also provides opportunities for looking at specific letter formation, writing on the line, starting to write in the correct place and letter sizing. During daily phonics sessions, the children are also given specific time to practise letter formation which is reinforced through rhymes and there are always multiple opportunities for practising this in other lessons too.

Following this, we then use the Nelson Handwriting scheme of work from Years 1-6 which is a whole-school, progressive programme designed to help all children develop a confident, legible and personal handwriting style. The programme includes resources for pattern practice and motor skill development; application of letter formation into words and sentences; and an online subscription to help model and implement the programme with the children. Nelson Handwriting is taught in discrete sessions (length and frequency is dependent on the age and needs of the children) and the children work in their Handwriting books, progressing from letter formation to joining letters. Sessions are taught to the whole class although reinforcement may sometimes take place in small groups and/or individually.

## **Assessment**

Teacher assessment is on-going and forms part of every lesson. Teachers assess children's achievement in writing by making both formative and summative assessments during lessons and use this information to plan the future work of each child/class. Teachers provide feedback to pupils on a daily basis, either in written or verbal form. Pupils are also frequently involved in self and peer assessment which aids editing and redrafting processes. At the end of each term, staff moderate children's writing across school to ensure accurate and fair judgements are made. From Year 2, children's 'SPAG' knowledge is assessed formally each term using NFER tests. Year 6 are formally assessed against the KS2 statutory writing framework.

## **Celebration**

At Straits, we believe it is important to celebrate children's successes and progress in all subject areas. Writing is celebrated across school and shared with other children and staff wherever possible. Children share their work with other members of staff, including senior leaders. Work is also celebrated in Praise assemblies in front of pupils, staff and parents. Our 'WOW Writing' display in the hall always showcases the best writing in each year group. As well as this, most classes have celebration displays in their classrooms to share the best examples of writing within their own year group.

## **Monitoring and Review**

Monitoring and reviewing the implementation of our writing curriculum, and amending our provision in light of this, is the responsibility of the writing subject leader, supported by the SLT and our English Team. Monitoring will take place in line with the school's strategic development termly calendars. It will be an on-going and informative process designed to measure impact of any development work, identify strengths and areas for development in both the curriculum and teaching and learning approaches, identify staff training requirements and will include both staff and pupil voice. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in the teaching of writing, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

Signed by:

Chair of Curriculum Committee: .....

Date: .....

Head teacher: .....

Date: .....

Agreed at the Curriculum Committee Meeting on: .....

## Appendices

### APPENDIX 1 – Straits’ genre overview

	Foundation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
<b>A u t u m n</b>	1. Name writing 2. Labels 3. Narrative (retelling traditional tales) 4. Non-fiction (facts) 5. Initial sounds in words 6. Invitation (including letters & cards)	1. Narrative (Traditional tales) 2. Narrative (Losing tale) 3. Instructions	1. Non-chronological report 2. Instructions 3. Character description 4. Narrative (Defeating the Monster tale)	1. Instructions 2. Narrative (Wishing Tale) 3. Non-chronological report 4. Diary (Stone Age Boy)	1. Narrative (Tale of Fear) 2. Persuasive writing 3. Diary 4. Balanced argument	1. Diary - WW2 2. Persuasion (speech) 3. Narrative (Warning tale) 4. Poetry (free verse)	1. Non-chronological report 2. Diary (different perspectives) 3. Persuasion (leaflet) 4. Narrative (Tale of fear)
<b>S p r i n g</b>	1. Recounts (visits and trip) 2. Non-fiction (facts) 3. Labels 4. Instructions 5. Narrative (science-fiction) 6. Descriptive writing	1. Narrative (Meeting tale) 2. Non-chronological report 3. Diary	1. Diary/recount 2. Non-chronological report 3. Narrative (Rags to Riches tale) 4. Letter (Informal)	1. Narrative (Rags to Riches tale) 2. Poetry (limericks) 3. Explanation text 4. Narrative (Finding tale)	1. Poetry (free verse with performance) 2. Narrative (Journey tale) 3. Letter (formal) 4. Non-chronological report	1. Narrative (Journey tale) 2. Balanced argument 3. Newspaper report 4. Biography	1. Persuasion (speech) 2. Narrative (Rags to Riches tale) 3. Narrative (Defeating the Monster tale) 4. Balanced argument
<b>S u m m e r</b>	1. Recount (visit) 2. Narrative 3. Non-fiction (factual sentences) 4. Instructions 5. Sentence writing (1→5 sentences) 6. Narrative	1. Narrative (Defeating the Monster tale) 2. Poetry (riddles) 3. Non-chronological report 4. Narrative (Wishing tale)	1. Poetry (?) 2. Narrative (Journey Tale) 3. Narrative (Stories from other cultures) 4. Simple explanation text	1. Narrative (Warning Tale) 2. Non-chronological report 3. Narrative (Journey tale) 4. Letter (informal)	1. Narrative (Defeating the Monster tale) 2. Narrative (Meeting tale) 3. Letter (informal) 4. Newspaper report	1. Narrative (Losing tale) 2. Explanation text 3. Narrative (Portal Story) 4. Letter (informal)	1. Explanation text 2. Newspaper report 3. Letter (formal) 4. Narrative (Journey tale)

### APPENDIX 2 – skills development example

Year 1 Autumn Toys and Tales	Year 1 Spring A Walk in the Woods	Year 1 Summer At the Seaside
<p><b>Unit 1: Traditional Tales over Autumn 1</b> Model text – known tales each week (Goldilocks, Jack &amp; the Beanstalk, Little Red Riding Hood, Three Little Pigs)</p> <p>Skills development –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ordering key events in a narrative</li> <li>sequencing sentences to form short narratives</li> <li>basic sentence structure: capital letters (to start sentences and for character names), full stops and finger spaces</li> <li>simple sentences</li> <li>adjectives to describe characters and settings</li> </ul> <p>Writing Ideas – story retells, sequencing, character descriptions/WANTED poster, setting descriptions</p>	<p><b>Unit 1: Meeting Tale</b> Hook - hunt for clues when walking through the woods Model text – Gruffalo</p> <p>Skills development –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use of interesting adjectives</li> <li>writing similes using ‘as’</li> <li>building descriptions of characters</li> <li>asking questions (introduce question marks)</li> </ul> <p>Independent Writing Ideas – adapt story of The Gruffalo to include own scary creature(s)</p>	<p><b>Unit 1: Defeating the Monster Tale</b> Hook - clues in a basket Model text – The Lighthouse Keeper’s Lunch</p> <p>Skills development –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exclamation marks and question marks</li> <li>capital letters for proper nouns (including days of the week)</li> <li>vocabulary development - using new language</li> <li>verbs and powerful verbs (-ed and -ing suffixes)</li> <li>time adverbials</li> </ul> <p>Independent Writing Ideas – own ‘defeating the monster’ tale using own ‘monster’ (change setting, characters and/or problems)</p>
<p><b>Unit 2: Losing Tale</b> Hook - bring favourite toys into school Model text – Dogger</p> <p>Skills development –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>capital letters for character names</li> <li>adjectives</li> <li>conjunctions (and, but, because)</li> <li>un- prefix</li> </ul> <p>Independent Writing Ideas – own version of Dogger but using their own special teddy (use post its to change key events in the story)</p>	<p><b>Unit 2: Non-chronological Report</b> Hook - Model text – A Gruffalo (self written)</p> <p>Skills development –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is a non-chronological report? - purpose and key features</li> <li>organisation of a report, focusing on sub-headings and grouping facts appropriately (diet, habitat, appearance)</li> <li>organising own facts</li> <li>conjunctions (and, but, so, because, which)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Unit 2: Poetry (riddles)</b></p> <p>Hook - clues to describe some items hidden in a box Model text – riddles (self written)</p> <p>Skills development –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is a riddle? - purpose and key features</li> <li>question marks</li> <li>vocabulary development - using new language</li> <li>similes</li> <li>sentence openers (sometimes, usually etc)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-est suffix</li> <li>question marks (Did you know...?)</li> </ul> <p>Independent Writing Ideas – non chronological report about another woodland animal, non-chronological report about imaginary creature</p>	<p>Independent Writing Ideas – seaside riddles to match a picture, pirate riddles to match a picture</p>
<p><b>Unit 3: Instructions</b>  Hook - make smiley face biscuits  Model text – Instructions for making 'Smiley face' biscuits (self written)</p> <p>Skills development –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are instructions? - purpose and key features</li> <li>following clear instructions</li> <li>structuring a set of instructions</li> <li>bossy verbs</li> <li>time adverbials and sequencing skills</li> </ul> <p>Independent Writing Ideas – Instructions for making 'reindeer' biscuits, instructions for getting ready for school, Instructions for making a sandwich</p>	<p><b>Unit 3: Diary</b>  Hook -  Model text – The diary of a Wombat (self written)</p> <p>Skills development –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is a diary? - purpose and key features</li> <li>exclamation marks and question marks</li> <li>first person and capitalising I</li> <li>capital letters for proper nouns (including days of the week)</li> <li>describing a character's emotions</li> <li>time conjunctions</li> </ul> <p>Independent Writing Ideas – own diary entry as Wombat, own diary entry about Bodenham Arboretum trip, own diary entry about World Book Day</p>	<p><b>Unit 3: Non-chronological Report</b>  Hook - seaside day art activity (make your own sea creature)  Model text – revisit Gruffalo text for features and structure</p> <p>Skills development –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sub-headings</li> <li>question marks</li> <li>bullet points for a list</li> <li>organising own facts</li> <li>sentence openers (sometimes, usually etc)</li> </ul> <p>Independent Writing Ideas – non-chronological report about sharks based on A Shark's Tale/Finding Nemo, non-chronological report about seaside holidays, non-chronological report about another or imaginary sea creature</p>
		<p><b>Unit 4: Wishing Tale</b>  Hook - a monkey visits the children asking for help to find items he lost at the Jungle Dance  Model text – Giraffes Can't Dance</p> <p>Skills development –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>vocabulary development - using new language</li> <li>character traits</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>verbs and powerful verbs (revisit -ed and -ing)</li> <li>adverbs</li> <li>alliteration</li> </ul> <p>Independent Writing Ideas – own 'wishing' tale using a sea creature (Ocean Dance instead of Jungle Dance)</p>
<p><b>SPAG (stand alone)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>add s for plurals</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Vocabulary</b>  Letter, word, sentence, sequence, full stop, capital letter, punctuation, adjective, conjunction, time conjunction, bossy (imperative) verb, singular, plural</p>	<p><b>Vocabulary</b>  Word, sentence, full stop, capital letter, question mark, exclamation mark, punctuation, adjective, simile, conjunction, sub-heading, time conjunction, first person, proper noun, suffix</p>	<p><b>Vocabulary</b>  Word, sentence, full stop, capital letter, question mark, exclamation mark, punctuation, adjective, simile, conjunction, verb, powerful verb, time adverbials, sub-heading, first person, proper noun, suffix, bullet points, adverbs, alliteration</p>
<p><b>Editing and Drafting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Persistent spelling errors highlighted in yellow.</li> <li>Key spelling errors to be written below the child's work to be practised three times.</li> </ul>		