

Writing in the Foundation Stage Policy



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Lead Personnel: Literacy
Coordinators, Lower School
Leader and Head teacher
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Aims which guide our policies and practice

As a school, we seek to promote shared moral and ethical values to unite both local and global interests which enable children to become global citizens. Our agreed school aims are:

- To create a happy and stimulating learning environment, in which each child will develop to their full potential, thereby achieving high educational standards.*
- To develop self-awareness, self-respect and tolerance of others by developing an understanding of the world in which they live.*
- To appreciate human achievements and aspirations; develop aesthetic sensitivity and appreciation; physical ability and co-ordination and a concern for the safety of themselves and others.*
- To prepare children to live and work with others, enabling them to be responsible and caring members of the community.*
- To give children, at the end of their period of primary education, an appetite for acquiring further knowledge, experience and skills, so ensuring they are prepared for the challenges of the next stage in their education.*

We ensure that all of our policies and practices are guided by these aims and we seek to ensure that they are at the forefront of all that we do.

Writing in the Foundation Stage

Introduction

Writing alongside reading, makes up literacy, one of the specific areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The Early Learning Goals for writing come from both literacy and physical development. They are:

Writing - children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

Moving and handling - children show good control and coordination in large and small movements. They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing

The early learning goals are targets that are to be met at the end of foundation stage.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to describe how we promote writing within the early years.

Aim(s):

The aim is that all children have access to the highest quality provision and teaching to promote writing in the early years.

Consultation:

This policy was written by Vicki Elvin, leader of lower school with consultation of foundation school teachers, nursery nurse and teaching assistants, the literacy coordinator and head teacher.

Sources and references:

Development Matters in the foundation stage publication by the DfE.

Procedures and practice

Children develop at their own rates and in their own ways, before a child can write there are many skills that need to be developed.

S/he will be able to:

- scribble
- hold a pen / pencil incorrectly
- make random marks and lines
- hold a pen / pencil correctly
- make purposeful lines, patterns and shapes
- draw a picture that is recognisable
- make the pencil do what s/he wants
- a picture, keeping within the lines
- copy letters
- form letters incorrectly
- form letters correctly

Aspects

Health and safety:

Appropriate supervision should be given when handling new equipment.

Planning:

Teachers will need to plan for each child's individual needs and progress them in writing accordingly ensuring that writing is an enjoyable experience and is a useful skill to possess. Focus writing sessions, tailored to children's needs, will be planned for in accordance to the handwriting policy. Areas of provision will require careful planning to ensure writing is promoted and engages children, access to writing equipment always ideas for areas where we can promote writing are listed below;

-Role Play Area

In the Home Corner, we provide a telephone, telephone directory, a note-pad for messages, a diary, plus paper for letters and shopping lists. This area can also be made into a shop (florist, greengrocers, bakers, seaside shop, newsagents, supermarket, pet shop), within the roleplay area opportunities for writing should be prominent and modelling of writing should be done.

-The transformation of the area creates new purposes for writing and can be linked to topic work, eg.

- Hospital (Ourselves, People who help us) – doctors and nurses make medical notes
- Café (Food) – orders menus and bills
- Three Bears House (Fairy Stories) – letters to and from Goldilocks and the Bears

-Role play can be also be developed outside, eg.

- a notepad for important reports with the firemen's helmets and hoses
- paper for taking down details of crime with the police helmets and walkie-talkies.
- Clipboards and paper for plans with the hard-hats, tools and big bricks
- Telephone and notepad for important phone messages

-Mark-making area

This area is well set out (inside and out) and includes;

- assorted pencils, pens, crayons, felt-tips, paper in a variety of shapes, sizes and colours
- ready-made books, notepads
- whiteboards or chalk boards
- forms and envelopes
- rulers, paperclips
- name cards, class lists, useful words to copy (dictionaries)
- letters, letter formation sheets

-Computing Area

The computer is placed in its own area with inviting labels and displays. We have a selection of programmes that encourage visual discrimination and letter recognition.

Children are invited to use the computer to write labels, their names for cards etc (with an adult).

Teaching:

Teachers have the responsibility to promote writing throughout the foundation area in an engaging and stimulating way.

As practitioners we must;

- Value children's attempts at writing which may initially appear to be a set of squiggles
- Encourage children to have a go
- Give lots of encouragement and praise which will give children confidence to continue to practise
- Teach, when appropriate, specific skills, ie. How to hold a pencil correctly developing from a tripod grasp to holding a pencil between thumb and two fingers to finally holding the pencil close to the point and use with good control.

What we can do to promote writing;

- Provide opportunities to develop fine motor skills using playdough and clay, painting, cutting and gluing, handle small objects and construction materials, thread beads as well as learn to grasp a pen / pencil
- Provide opportunities for writing and mark-making in all areas, including outdoor play
- Provide activities where the emphasis is not on the end result but on working towards appropriate skills
- Create opportunities for children to work in large and small groups, alongside others and by themselves
- Offer activities that are adult-directed or that offer freedom of choice which are challenging and enjoyable
- Create opportunities for children to see adults writing –
 - for themselves, eg. at register time, assessing, making notes
 - for others, eg. scribing, writing children's names on work, writing labels

Homework/parent partnership:

When appropriate ideas for writing should be given to parents, this could involve letter tracing or pencil control sheets. Again, differentiating tasks to suit abilities is paramount.

Resources:

Literacy coordinators and class teachers are responsible to organising and ordering writing resources. A range of writing media and resources are available in school to use.

Assessment:

Assessment of foundation stage writing will be done throughout the year by monitoring progression and development. Half termly judgements will be made for each child.

Monitoring and evaluation:

Moderation of writing will happen on a regular basis involving all foundation stage teachers. Moderation across school is also essential to understand how to progress to a depth level. Observations and learning walks will support the monitoring and evaluation process. The literacy co-ordinators and SLT team will organise moderation meetings.

Concluding notes

Monitoring and reviewing:

The literacy coordinators, lower school leader, head teacher and governors all have responsibilities in monitoring and implementing and reviewing this policy. Following the monitoring and evaluation process will allow an in depth review to take place.