

WRITING AT

OCEAN ACADEMY

Date of last review:	April 2023	Review period:	Yearly
Owner:	Ocean Academy	Ratified:	

Purpose of our writing policy:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all staff understand the high expectations agreed, whilst establishing and maintaining a consistent approach to the teaching and learning of writing across our school; ensuring that all learners are able to 'share their ideas, communicate with others and learn from the wider curriculum'. The effective teaching of writing requires not just a well-structured and progressive programme but its consistent implementation in every class. Consequently, this will ensure that excellent attainment and progress is achieved by all children, regardless of ability, gender or socio-economic backgrounds.

Underpinning evidence:

1. Ofsted Research review: English
2. The forgetting curve, Ebbinghaus
3. Cognitive Load Theory, Sweller
4. Principles of Instruction, Rosenshine
5. Metacognition and Self-regulated Learning, EEF
6. Feedback, EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit
7. Mastery Learning, EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit

At Ocean, our writing curriculum:

- Focuses on writing for different purposes: to describe, to persuade, to entertain (narrate), to inform (explain and instruct), give and respond to information, and to discuss (argue).
- Provides pupils with the opportunity to produce many different forms of writing, including essays; stories, scripts, poetry and other imaginative writing; notes and scripts for talks and presentations; and a range of other narrative and non-narrative texts, including arguments and personal/formal letters.
- Provides pupils with opportunities to develop their proficiency in two interrelated areas of writing - transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing).

The Ocean writing curriculum has been developed to ensure the following:

'Fluent transcription skills are the foundations of writing. If pupils master these, they can then focus their attention on developing, organising and communicating their

ideas. If spelling and handwriting are not fluent, pupils' working memory is overloaded and it becomes difficult to focus on composition'.

An effective writing curriculum should give time for pupils to be taught and to practise the component skills of transcription, at least in the early stages of primary. Kellogg has argued that, if pupils do not develop sufficient fluency in handwriting (or typing) in primary school, this significantly affects the development of the high-order processes, such as planning and generating ideas, and writing and reviewing texts.'

Implementation:

Transcription (fluency):

'Fluent transcription skills are the foundations of writing. If pupils master these, they can then focus their attention on developing, organising and communicating their ideas. If spelling and handwriting are not fluent, pupils' working memory is overloaded and it becomes difficult to focus on composition'.

Handwriting:

Handwriting is a key focus when pupils join Ocean Academy in Year 3. Within the first term, pupils repeatedly practise through the following progression to ensure letter formation and joins are correct and fluent.

- Anti-clockwise letters (a, c, d, e, g, o, q)
- Clockwise letters (b, h, k, m, n, p, r)
- Straight letters (i, j, l, t)
- Under arch letters (u, y)
- Diagonal letters (v, w, x, z)
- Curvy letters (f, s)
- Bottom exit letter joins
- Top exit to 'e' join
- Top exit letter joins.

Once this is mastered, there is no longer a need for whole-class handwriting sessions. However, individual feedback is still given during writing sessions across the whole school. Handwriting and fluency is monitored regularly by class teachers and English leader, and appropriate interventions are put into place where necessary.

In lower Key Stage 2, English books are printed with handwriting lines to support pupils in their development of handwriting fluency. When the teacher assesses that this is no longer necessary, pupils move on to books without these lines.

Presentation and handwriting is highly valued across the school, creating a culture where pupils take pride and care in their work. This is upheld by all staff across the academy.

For pupils who are not yet secure in their handwriting, intervention is put into place swiftly to develop their fluency. Additional sessions within a small group are planned to meet specific needs. Depending on the needs of the child, interventions are designed to incorporate various strategies to develop the gross and fine motor skills needed for success.

For pupils with a physical disability, or who over time, show little progress in their handwriting fluency, pupils are taught to touch type using BBC Dance Mat Typing. This enables pupils to be successful in writing by removing a physical barrier.

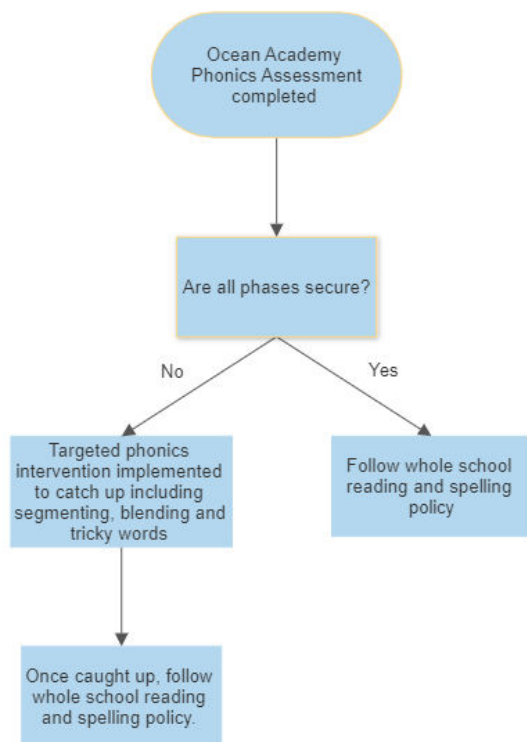
Phonics and spelling:

‘The early stages of spelling begin with pupils learning phonics.’

Because of this, linking closely to our reading policy, a rigorous process is in place to ensure that phonics are secure as soon as possible.

Pupils identified as not passing the Year 1 phonics screen, complete a phonics assessment within the first week of school. This identifies the particular phase of phonics which is not yet secure. Targeted intervention and specialist teaching is then implemented to ensure that all children are working at or above phase 5 phonics.

Children repeat the phonics assessment half termly. Once a child has ‘caught up’ and is working at or above phase 5 phonics, they are removed from the intervention.



‘Stopping to think about spelling a word uses working memory needed for other aspects of writing. Pupils may then forget ideas or plans they were holding in their heads.’

Because of this, a progressive and systematic approach to teaching spelling is planned and implemented across the school.

Following the National Curriculum, each year group has been allocated a set of spelling patterns and rules to explicitly teach, revisit and revise to ensure that pupils are able to spell words accurately and fluently to reduce cognitive load when writing.

Timetabled spelling sessions occur regularly throughout the week to learn and apply the spelling patterns and rules. These sessions will incorporate:

- Explicit teaching of the spelling pattern and rule and exploring words that follow this rule
- Phonic knowledge and terminology (for example, sound buttons, graphemes, phonemes)
- Repeated practise of the spelling pattern and the agreed spelling words, displayed on working walls for reference purposes
- Repeated written practise of each spelling ensuring fluent handwriting to aid memorisation and muscle memory
- Discussion of a word's etymology
- Application of these spellings within contextualised sentences
- Regular low stakes quizzing within lessons
- Home learning of the set spellings and weekly testing.

For pupils who are not yet secure in their spelling, additional intervention is put into place to secure this learning. Additional sessions within a small group are planned to meet specific needs. Depending on the needs of the child, interventions are designed to incorporate various strategies. See above for phonics intervention linking to spelling.

Across the curriculum, incorrect spellings are highlighted in pink and corrected by the pupils in green pen, in line with the assessment and feedback policy. Teachers also select appropriate words, specific to the pupil, for repeated practice. This repeated practice aids memorisation and muscle memory and serves to support pupils in retaining the correct spellings in their long-term memory.

Ready for the beginning of a new topic of learning, a set spelling list of topic words is sent home to aid pre-learning.

Termly, pupils complete a spelling, punctuation and grammar assessment, with spelling tracked separately throughout the school, to monitor progress over time.


Composition:

‘The grammatical structures of a text carry much of the writer’s intended meaning. Exploring these choices in texts allows the writer to understand the writer’s thoughts better.’

Because of this, a logical, progressive and systematic approach to teaching writing is planned and implemented across the school. This supports pupils in developing a secure understanding of English grammar for composition.

Our curriculum is organised to focus on sentence recognition, sentence construction, meaning and accuracy. The curriculum is designed to ensure that time is given to master the grammatical structures identified in our planning, with skills blocked throughout the school year. This enables pupils to master and become proficient in these skills so that they can confidently and creatively apply their understanding to challenging and varying contexts. Grammar knowledge and structures are threaded throughout the curriculum across topics and year groups to ensure that they are revisited and revised so that new knowledge builds upon existing schemas.

To ensure this, the following planning and curriculum design is in place:

- **Progressive planning of grammar and overarching themes within year groups**
 - The teaching and learning of grammar is sequenced in a way that new learning is introduced in small chunks so that children can master and become proficient in each area. It is planned progressively to build on prior and existing knowledge, developing fluency. This is evident within our grammar progression planning ( GRAMMAR PROGRESSION).
- **Writing purposes/audience/planning overview**
 - At Ocean Academy, the curriculum is planned to ensure that children can apply their learning to different writing purposes, across different subjects. The curriculum has been designed so that the explicit teaching of grammar skills are interwoven and experienced through a variety of genres and writing purposes. This provides opportunities for children to manipulate each skill for different purposes, effects and audiences.
- **Model text planning - purpose of talk**
 - Model texts are created by teachers for each chunk of learning, to include the key grammar focus (linking to the grammar progression) so that children can

appreciate and analyse the effective use of the grammar within the text. Planned collaboratively by teachers to match the needs of the cohort, these model texts are personalised accordingly. All model texts are collated and quality assured by the English Lead. These are used within lessons to stimulate discussions, interpretations and analyse the use of grammar within the text. From this, direct instruction and modelling are used to explicitly teach each grammar focus through the phased learning approach.

- **Phases of learning**

- For expertise to develop, pupils benefit from direct instruction and modelling, followed by extensive, deliberate practice until they are fluent. Teachers model the effective use of the grammar focus at a sentence level. During phase one and two, the pupils then have the opportunity, with scaffolded support and challenge, to repeatedly practise and become fluent with the grammar focus. Effective practice consists of short, focused tasks, interspersed with feedback, before pupils apply what they have learnt to their independent writing. Once fluent, pupils move onto phase three, which is an opportunity to apply their learning (current and prior) in an independent writing task. To encourage deeper thinking and further manipulation of the skill, each phase of learning includes a greater depth challenge.

- **Cross-curricular writing**

- Pupils are provided with opportunities to write across the curriculum as part of our ATL curriculum. The curriculum has been planned and sequenced carefully to ensure pupils are exposed to a broad coverage of worldly knowledge. The writing approach is then applied within foundation subject learning. For example, when learning about the Romans in Year 4, pupils may write a persuasive speech after studying a model text.
- Writing expectations across the school, in every subject, are high and this is demonstrated through high-quality teacher feedback, leading to excellent outcomes.

- **Purpose of writing**

- Embedded throughout the ATL curriculum, pupils write for real audiences and purposes about interesting topics, of which they are knowledgeable. Pupils are given regular opportunities to share and perform their work.

- **Opportunities for pupils to plan, draft, edit and revise**

- Within the writing process, pupils plan their writing regularly and this is modelled using a variety of strategies which best meet the purpose. Pupils are explicitly taught to plan effectively.

- In line with our assessment and feedback policy, writing sessions include various assessment for learning strategies, including cut-away teaching, pupil conferencing, verbal feedback, red pen questions and pink stars to move the learning on. The feedback given prompts pupils to think deeply, reflect, edit and redraft their work.
- **Intervention for those falling behind**
 - Within the lesson or series of lessons, teachers will use cut-away teaching strategies to work with any pupils requiring further support.
 - As part of the assessment cycle, pupils' progress and attainment in writing is regularly monitored through collaborative writing moderations. From these assessments, individual focus areas will be identified and addressed through pupil conferencing.
 - For pupils who have a specific focus area, for example handwriting, spelling or phonics, which is limiting their fluency, intervention is put into place for these pupils to catch up and become fluent.

SEND and inclusion:

Pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities are provided with an inclusive education through the effective use of scaffolds and support to enable all pupils can access the learning and work with their peers. All planning ensures that pupils with SEND or physical impairment can achieve just as well as their peers. The school works closely with the SENCO and external agencies through regular consultations to understand the specific needs, individual goals and incorporate these into the planning and delivery of writing lessons.

Monitoring:

The Academy Improvement Plan and English Action Plan form the basis of when, who and what is to be monitored.

This is likely to include:

- Learning walks and observations of writing sessions across the school
- Monitoring of planning and assessment
- Pupil progress meetings
- Analysis of data
- Pupil voice

Aspirations Academies standards team also monitors provision regularly throughout the year.

Assessment:

‘Well-designed assessment enables teachers to gather evidence to plan subsequent teaching that helps pupils to know and do more.’ Ofsted, 2022

Assessment within English is regular and often. Teachers’ subject knowledge of each aspect is secure and planning and resources support this to enable teachers to make effective assessments and provide specific feedback to move learning on, within and across lessons, blocks of learning and year groups.

Summative assessments are made of the knowledge and skills mapped across the curriculum to ensure that pupils are making progress and mastering these skills over time. This assessment system is progressive and builds year on year to enable teachers to plan from their pupils’ current level of development.

Review:

This policy is subject to yearly reviews by the English leader and SLT. Upon review, amendments will be made in line with the Academy Improvement Plan and shared with all staff.