



1. INTRODUCTION

This policy document is written after consultation with the teaching staff and the Governor with responsibility for Literacy.

It is a working document, which reflects the ethos and practice within the school in relation to the teaching of Writing. It has been written with due regard to the requirements of the Primary National Strategy schemes of work and the National Curriculum and it will be monitored and evaluated according to changes within these documents as and when they arise.

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2. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

At Molescroft Primary School, we believe that teaching children to understand the power of writing is an important part of our job as teachers. We believe that if we equip the children with the correct writing tools, they will be able to use them effectively within a literate world. As teachers, we are responsible for providing children in Molescroft Primary School with a stimulating writing environment in which we offer encouragement and good quality modelling of writing. We aim to have clear expectations of writing and to communicate these targets to the children. We aim to have high expectations of the finished writing product and to encourage the children to maintain the same standards at all times.

We believe that a **successful** writing classroom should include:

- Clear expectations, targets and regular observation and assessment of progress towards the targets.
- A stimulating writing environment with
 - displayed and celebrated examples of children's own writing
 - opportunities for writing to be linked to activities **across** the curriculum.
- All adults (not just teachers) as role models who use writing explicitly in the classroom for a variety of purposes and demonstrate on a regular basis what they are doing.
- A wide experience of reading as the primary source of knowledge about how written language looks and sounds.
- The systematic, regular and direct teaching of phonics, spelling and grammar.
- Rich oral experience of Speaking and Listening opportunities and Drama as a preparation for writing.
- Regular Shared Writing and Guided Writing sessions in order to teach and refine the skills of text composition.
- Opportunities for supported and independent writing linked to and developed from Shared Writing.



It is our aim therefore, to provide these important factors within our classrooms in order to provide a supportive and stimulating writing environment.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing body should, in cooperation with the head teacher, determine the school's general policy and approach to writing at Molescroft Primary School.

The Literacy coordinator should advise the Headteacher, staff and Governors of the current and changing practice in writing at Molescroft Primary School and keep them up to date with new initiatives put forward by the Government and LEA.

The Teaching Staff should in cooperation with the Headteacher and Literacy coordinator, plan and deliver effective writing lessons which reflect the school policy.

The SENCO should, in cooperation with the Headteacher, Literacy Coordinator and teaching staff provide support and additional writing resources for children with Special Educational Needs.

4. PRACTICE

DEVELOPING WRITING

In order to be an effective and successful writer, we need to

- Teach children to perceive the power of writing and equip them to use it well.
- Teach children to enjoy writing and to be competent, confident and not to hesitate in putting their ideas on paper.
- Teach children to recognise the need to adapt their writing to suit a range of audiences and purposes.
- Teach the children the most appropriate form of writing for a given task.
- Teach children to use spelling and grammar accurately and with confidence.
- Teach children a fluent and legible handwriting style in which to write.
- Give children opportunities to listen to quality Literacy in 'class novel' time.

THE TEACHING OF WRITING.

In Molescroft Primary School, we follow the Primary National Literacy Strategy and teach the specific objectives which are the most appropriate to our children's needs.

In general, we aim to consolidate three key features of writing which are particularly important:



Text Cohesion

The children are taught how to link sentences.

Firstly, they are taught how to create a coherent sequence of ideas.

Later, they are taught to select from a wide range of connecting words and phrases and to use verbs and pronouns consistently to create cohesive texts.

Sentence Construction and Punctuation

Firstly, children are taught how to represent their ideas in sentences which they are made aware of through reading.

Later, children are taught to link ideas within sentences by combining and sequencing clauses which in turn, creates more interesting and varied writing.

Word Choice and Modification

Firstly, children are taught to select words and phrases that add precision to their writing. This is achieved by choosing and discussing rich vocabulary from the books read and shared.

Later, children are taught and encouraged to enhance their meaning through the choice of words and through modifying nouns and verbs to add focus, and variety for the reader.

We are aware that some children pick up these features easily but for the majority, the nature of different writing texts need to be investigated and taught.

WRITING ROUTINES IN MOLESCROFT.

Planning Literacy.

Each teacher is responsible for ensuring that the Primary National Literacy Strategy is used within the classroom. This document is the **Long Term** plan for Literacy and gives specific ideas of what to teach in each year group. Each teacher is responsible for assessing the Literacy set and teaching the objectives relevant to the needs of the children. It is important that teachers plan over a block of work, not weekly, to ensure the development of the reading and writing process.

Most teachers are using the Framework Literacy Unit plans as their **Medium Term** plans and Year 6 also refer to the Year 6 Literacy Exemplification units. The Medium Term plans inform us when to teach the objectives from the Framework.

Teachers are encouraged to manipulate the order of units to take advantage of cross curricular links. By using the links, children are able to broaden and enhance their command of literacy by having different contexts in which to develop their writing.

There is a **Short Term** planning format in school which all teachers use. The Short term plans explain how we are to teach the objectives from the framework (Appendices 1a and 1b)

On the Short Term plan, several important features are identified. For example, the unit and its duration are written including an outcome for the unit which the children are expected to achieve. The objective for each lesson is identified on the plan and should

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show a progression of skills from day to day. There should be regular teaching of Shared Reading at the beginning of the unit moving in to Shared Writing in the latter half of the unit. Grammar work is also identified. Speaking and Listening activities are also a vital part of the initial stages of writing and needs to be incorporated in the planning.

The Independent section explains what the children will be doing when working independently.

The plenary is also written down which may be of various types.

There is an Assessment section to write down any issues concerned.

Other Important Literacy Material.

Each teacher is responsible for ensuring that the 3 key features (Text Cohesion; Sentence Construction and punctuation; word choice and modification See page 3) are taught within the Literacy lesson. As part of the Accelerated Learning process, we try to make our Literacy lessons as interactive and as challenging as possible. Often lessons include investigations, problem-solving, role-play and language play in order to encourage the children's interest in how language works.

KS1

The National Literacy Strategy 'Developing Early Writing' provides ideas and units of work suitable for use in KS1.

KS2

The National Literacy Strategy 'Grammar for Writing' book is specific to KS2 and provides units for each year group to follow. Each teacher is responsible for ensuring that these units are covered according to the Medium Term plan and they are also identified on the Short Term plan.

'Letters and Sounds' and 'Support for Spelling' is the basis of the spelling strategy used throughout the school. Each teacher is responsible for ensuring that these units are covered according to the Medium Term plan and they are also identified on the Short Term plan. (In KS1, Phonics would be taught separately)

Shared, Independent and Guided Writing.

As part of a Literacy unit in any Year group, there will be opportunities for Shared, Independent and Guided Writing. At Molescroft, we firmly believe that children are inspired to write by firstly engaging in good quality texts which act as a model for what the children will be asked to write later in the unit. Therefore, the first part of a unit tends to be devoted to Shared Reading activities where appropriate. The second half of the unit is often devoted to Writing activities.



Shared Writing.

Shared writing can be observed in all classrooms at the appropriate times. We believe that shared writing enables us as teachers to work with the whole class, to model, explore and discuss the choices writers make at the point of writing. It is also invaluable for making links between reading and writing by investigating how an author has used language to achieve a particular effect. During Shared Writing we also scaffold aspects of writing-e.g.-spelling and concentrate children's attention on how to tackle more difficult words. Shared Writing is invaluable for allowing the opportunity to teach different aspects of the Writing Process. In all KS1 and KS2 classrooms, teachers model how to plan, draft, edit and proof-read writing.

As part of our Accelerated Learning philosophy, we believe that Shared Writing should be as interactive and as fun as possible. Therefore, we tend to use one or a combination of the following teaching techniques:

- Teacher Demonstration - we demonstrate how to write a text or a particular feature of that text.
- Teacher Scribing- the pupils offer their contributions building upon the teacher's demonstration.
- Supported Composition- Children use white boards or books to write in pairs or individually a limited amount of the text to ensure understanding.

By using an appropriate combination of these techniques, it ensures that the children are fully engaged in the Teaching of the Writing process.

Independent Writing.

It is our aim in Molescroft to make the flow from Shared Writing to Independent Writing as smooth as possible. By engaging in Shared Writing first, every child in the class has been 'warmed up' and is ready to work. There should be no occasions where children are given books or paper and asked to write without any Shared Reading or Writing to support them (The exception to this may be if the writing is part of SATS revision or is to be used as an assessment)

Independent writing tasks can take many forms but must flow from Shared Writing and take the child on to the next step of becoming an independent writer.

In the 'independent' part of the lesson, children will also have opportunities to work in pairs and groups on the writing process. We believe this is an important way of sharing ideas and improving the quality of what the children produce.

Guided Writing

It is our aim at Molescroft to devote Guided Writing time to each group in the class when appropriate. For example, during a Shared Writing week, the teacher will work with a different group each day. The group and the objective for Guided Writing are identified on the Short Term plan but Guided Writing will mainly cover the following teaching points:

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- To support children in planning and drafting their own work.
- To revise and edit work in progress
- To provide differentiated support for particular groups.

It is our aim to devote two-thirds of the 'Whole class work' to Shared Reading and Writing and one-third to Spelling and Grammar work or visa-versa depending on which is the most appropriate for the particular unit being taught.

Extended Writing Time.

It is our aim at Molescroft to allow an extended or sustained writing time. 'The Big Write' should occur once a fortnight and give children experience of writing for a longer period of time. For example, it may be important after demonstrating how to draft a particular text-type the day before, to allow the children more time to draft a text themselves. They may need more than 20 minutes independent time to do this and so may be given an extension of time.

Speaking and Listening

Speaking and Listening is a vital step in enhancing children's writing. Children are given the opportunity to use a variety of techniques such as, response partners, role play, hot-seating and drama. In this way children can develop their ideas and language skills and therefore improve their writing.

Cross-Curricular Links.

The staff work hard to find cross-curricular links so that the writing skills learnt in Literacy can be used appropriately in other subjects. Each subject will maintain its integrity as far as skills are concerned. However, writing is an important skill in many subjects so we will always aim to make the most of cross-curricular links where appropriate.

The Teaching of Grammar.

As a staff, we firmly believe that grammar is the means to an end and not an end in itself and must therefore, be strongly embedded in the teaching of shared reading and writing at both Key Stages. However, we ensure that the objectives of these lessons are explicitly on grammatical features. In general, the teaching of writing follows a similar pattern:

Shared Reading

Sentence level teaching

Shared Writing

Guided Writing

Independent Writing

In this sense, the children are given the opportunity to investigate the effects of vocabulary and grammatical choices within the context of purposeful reading and well chosen texts. Children are given the experience of exploring written texts in order to identify some

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important grammatical choices writers have made to achieve their purpose- e.g. choice of verbs, use of pronouns, sentence structure. We try to make investigations as active as possible so that children are more likely to remember the features and apply them to their own writing. Children are not expected to write however, unless the **teacher** has demonstrated the type of writing first.

In Foundation Stage, practitioners follow the recommendations of the National Strategies resource. 'Mark Making Matters'. Within the Foundation Stage both the indoor and outdoor environment has resources to support the children's mark making, drawing and writing. It is ensured that the children have opportunity to use mark making, drawing and writing to explore and develop their own interests, by providing an environment in which creativity, originality and expressions are valued. The children are given time and space to concentrate on mark-making activities using a wide variety of resources that are challenging and interesting and can be used in a variety of ways as they express their thoughts, ideas and understanding.

Practitioners involve themselves in the children's mark-making by modelling the process and reordering children's thoughts. The explicit teaching of handwriting is outlined in the handwriting policy. As part of the phonics programme the children are taught to segment words into phonemes for spelling and writing (see reading/spelling policies)

In KS1, as well as following the Literacy Strategy Framework objectives, teachers may also use ideas from the Literacy Strategy 'Developing Early Writing' book.

In KS2, as well as following the Literacy Framework objectives, teachers also use The National Literacy Strategy 'Grammar for Writing' book in order to teach the relevant grammar units. We find these units particularly useful as the activities are interactive and investigative in style.

The Teaching of Spelling.

The teaching of spelling has been given considerable thought in Molescroft Primary School as it is an important aspect of writing. The fundamental principles and the practice of teaching spelling in this school is written in a separate Spelling Policy but the main concern in writing is that spelling must not be allowed to dominate our responses to children's writing. Very good efforts at writing can often be dismissed because of basic spelling errors and this can damage a child's perception of him/herself as a writer. We try to have a more positive and interactive approach to spelling that enables children to explore spelling patterns and investigate how words are constructed. When drafting writing, children are encouraged to 'have a go' at unfamiliar spellings in order to continue the 'creative flow'. Then during the editing and proof-reading stage, children can use the different spelling strategies explained in the policy to check their spellings.

Teachers ensure that they cover the relevant spelling objectives within the Literacy lesson.

'Letters and Sounds' and 'Support for Spelling' are the documents on which our teaching of spelling is based.



The Proof-Reading System.

Within the Literacy lesson, proof-reading techniques are taught using 'Teacher Demonstration' and 'Shared Writing' teaching methods. The children are made aware that checking their work for spelling mistakes and grammatical errors is a vital and important part of the Writing Process. We agree as a staff that children should have the ability to proof-read work independently and not waste time queuing up to have their writing checked. We also want to avoid the scenario where children become accustomed to teachers proof-reading their work and finding all the mistakes for them. Proof-reading not only needs to be seen as a way of checking work, but also as way of improving it. Literacy response partners are important in [this respect](#). The Proof-reading system is taught and referred to in lessons to ensure that the children can proof-read work independently.

In KS2, the Proof-reading system is the model shown in Appendix 6 of the Spelling Policy and Appendix 2 of this policy.

In KS1, the Proof-Reading system has been adapted to suit the needs of the children. Year 1 classes use the Sentence Snake. Year 2 use the Checklist Cards as advised by the LA Literacy team but they also have the KS2 Proof-reading System to refer to in their Spelling Logs.

The Use of ICT.

As a school, we are fully committed to developing the use of ICT in Literacy lessons, particularly in the teaching of writing. The use of the Interactive whiteboard and multi-media resources are a valuable tool in stimulating interest in writing. Having computers available for children to use can enhance the writing process at all stages. The Internet is also used for research purposes where appropriate.

As a staff, we are dedicated to keeping up to date with the latest changes and advancements. The Literacy coordinators and ICT coordinator will ensure that staff are given training on the teaching of Literacy using ICT where appropriate.

MARKING AND ASSESSMENT OF WRITING.

Responses To Writing Within the Lesson.

Within the Literacy lesson, it is important that we use good quality texts when doing Shared Reading so that children are introduced to well-established and respected authors. In the [Shared Writing](#) aspect of the Literacy lesson, teachers ensure that they model good, well-crafted forms of writing for the children to learn from. Throughout these sessions, the teachers are constantly assessing the children's reactions to the texts and giving feedback on children's responses and questions. Within [Guided Writing](#) sessions, teachers give relevant feedback to the children when it is needed rather than writing comments in their books after the session. This is also an informal assessment of how the children are coping with the writing task. The [plenary](#) also provides an opportunity for assessment when we share and reflect on the writing achieved.



Marking Writing.

From Year 2 upwards, children are becoming more familiar with the Writing Process, which is displayed in most classrooms as a reminder. The children understand that the purpose of the Thinking, Planning and Drafting stages of writing is to bring cohesion and clarity to their thought processes and ideas. The first drafts of the writing should not be interrupted and troubled with lengthy searches for correct spellings. When the children move on to the Proof-Reading stage however, the time is given to checking any unfamiliar or unsure words. These words will have already been high-lighted within the writing because children are encouraged to put a line under any words they feel may need investigating later. The children go through the Proof-reading stages and then use the Spelling Strategy Checklist to investigate unknown words.

As teachers, our initial responses to a child's piece of work particularly at the Drafting stage should be related to the content (Composition and Effect) and should concentrate on the positive aspects of the writing. Later on, during the Proof-reading stage, any words that the child should know can be high-lighted using the symbol **Sp** and written correctly for them to transfer on to their Spelling Walls. Children should also be encouraged to transfer words that they find particularly useful on to their spelling walls. These words may be found in Reading books or during Guided Reading sessions.

I Can Titles and Targets Achieved.

As a staff, we believe that consistency is the key to effective marking in the sense that children should know exactly what has been marked and how. Children are part of the marking process in this school and are encouraged to read and respond to marking rather than it being an inactive process. At the beginning of each Literacy lesson, the teacher makes the objectives explicit and an 'I can...' title is written on the board. The children then understand what their target is for the independent task. The marking is then linked to the 'I can' title. If the child has succeeded in achieving the title target, the teacher puts TA in his/her book (Target Achieved)

If the child has not succeeded in achieving the target, then the teacher puts T (Target not achieved) and then writes a comment about what the child needs to do to improve. It is the aim that in the next lesson, the children are given time to read the marking and respond to it in their books

Extended Writing/Cross-Curricular Writing.

In extended pieces of writing such as the drafting of a story or a report, it may be valid to draw attention to different mistakes for different children. In other words, one child may have missed out full stops whereas another child may have misused paragraphs. In these situations, the children are again encouraged to become part of the Marking process. Each classroom displays a 'Marking at Molescroft' poster. The teacher writes T under the written work and then chooses a symbol which fits the mistakes the child has made. The child then reads looks at the symbol and the chart and is given time to improve the work in



that chosen area. The teacher then checks the improvement and puts TA if target achieved.

Expect To See Charts.

Each classroom has its own Expect To See chart or area which can be used in all subjects but is particularly useful in writing tasks. After discussing the features of a certain type of writing, the teacher can put the main points of that writing on the chart to remind children of what to put in their own writing.

For example, after a week of Shared Reading where we have investigated Instructional/Procedural texts, the teacher may write on the chart that he/she expects to see

- A goal of what is to be achieved
- Materials/Equipment needed
- Sequenced steps to achieve the goal
- Use of numbers/bullet points to signal the order of steps

This gives the children visual cues when writing so that 'writers block' can be avoided as much as possible. The child can also assess their writing performance against the checklist – 'Have I remembered all the features of this text-type?'

The Writer's Charter

During many staff meetings and Inset training days, minutes were kept on the key points that arose from discussions concerning the teaching of writing. The Writer's Charter is a summary of these main points and is kept in every classroom as a reminder of what to do and what to expect when teaching writing. An A4 copy of the Writers Charter is also kept in our Literacy files. Appendix 4.

Formal Assessment of Writing.

Each teacher is responsible for assessing writing by using the APP criteria. This will be an ongoing assessment which will result in an overall 'Teacher Assessment' in Jan and at the end of the year. This level will be recorded on the school's system and reported to parents. In addition to this, children will be given timed writing assessments each term which will support the teacher's assessment judgments when deciding what a child is capable of doing independently.

As a result of these writing assessments, children will be given writing targets. These are written on the child's 'Hit-List' card which is kept with their work so that they can refer to them whenever they are writing. These targets are constantly reviewed to ensure that the child is working on his/her target.

Standardised Tests.

In May of each year, Year 2 and Year 6 children sit their National SATs test in order to gain a Level in Writing.



In KS2 the children will sit Optional SATs in Jan and June and the writing will be used to support APP level decisions.

These levels are then put in to the school assessment database and analysed in order to set Level targets for the following year.

HOMEWORK

The specific guidelines for the setting of Literacy homework is written in the Homework Policy. The Literacy homework set is usually relevant to the work that has been undertaken in class for that week or may be preparation for the work planned for the week after. Spelling homework is also given and again will be relevant to the investigations in class.

5. DOCUMENTATION

DfES/QCA, *The National Curriculum: Handbook for primary teachers in England*, HMSO, London, 1999

DfES The National Primary Framework Literacy Strategy, DfES, London 1

DfES The National Literacy Strategy- Developing Early Writing, DfES, London 2001

Mark Making Matters – October 2008

Letters and Sounds: Principles and Practice of high quality phonics – April 2007

DfES The National Literacy Strategy- Grammar For Writing, DfES, London, 2000.

DfES The National Literacy Strategy- Spelling Bank, DfES, London, 1999.

DCsf Support for Spelling – London February 2009

Primary Strategy site “ Gateway to Writing”

Talk for Writing – November 2008

6. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

In each class, it is standard practise that teachers will differentiate work to suit the ability of children within the class. Groups are often ability set and the Guided Writing and Guided Reading sessions are planned to each group’s ability.

Writing targets are specific to the child and therefore at their ability.

Assessments are very carefully analysed in order to identify children that may be either struggling or excelling in Writing and the teacher is made aware of those children supported by the SEN and G&T co-ordinator to ensure they are appropriately accommodated within the Literacy lesson.



7. INSET

The Literacy coordinators will attend relevant writing courses organised by the Literacy advisers. The Literacy coordinator will deliver INSET on changes to National and East Riding policy on writing.

8. LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Short Term Planning Literacy plan
2. KS2 Proof-reading System.
3. Target cards
4. The Writer's Charter



Teachers' Charter for Writers at Molescroft Primary School

Following close analysis of the performance of Writers at Molescroft Primary School, evaluation of teaching strategies and the support of Literacy Consultants and Leading Teachers from within the school and externally, we agree that the following constitutes the **ideal** when teaching children to write. We agree to use this as a basis for teaching children to write.

- Children will not be asked to write without preparation beforehand about what to write.
- There must be no loss of momentum between shared writing activities and independent writing activities.
- There must always be a reason for asking pupils to write, and they must know what it is.
- The atmosphere in the classroom must be conducive to writing.
- Writing sessions should be appropriately divided with short breaks between bursts of intensive and focussed writing time.
- Before writing children should warm up, physically and mentally.
- Before writing children should have had the opportunity to imagine their work, use a range of Dramatic techniques including 'hot seating' and verbalise their writing with a partner or group.
- Young children should always verbalise their ideas before writing.
- Writing tasks should be broken down and linked to clear time limits, until the pupils have the maturity to do this for themselves.
- Children should know what they have to do to achieve the level they are aiming to reach.
- Teachers must use positive criticism with pupils and not accept basic answers; they should always challenge pupils. Teachers must not accept mediocrity.
- During Shared Writing, teachers must be explicit about what they are doing.
- In all subjects children should not be expected to write without there being some revision of the expectations of the piece.
- When writing in all subjects and in all situations, children must know the form, purpose and audience of the writing.
- Children should be reminded when necessary that 'If they have been taught something, they are expected to do it!'
- Pace should be expected at all times.
- Time targets are essential whenever children write.
- Children should be taught active punctuation with sound effects.
- Every writing activity including assessments should be preceded by quick fire activities.
- Peer/paired marking strategies should be employed where appropriate.
- Skeleton frames should be used to give children confidence and understanding when writing.
- Pupils should be exposed to good examples of the relevant, different elements of narrative writing that they will tackle. Children must be able to appreciate what a 'good one' looks like.
- Poetry must not be underestimated as a powerful tool for language development.
- The emotional ability of pupils to describe feelings/emotions must be developed orally and in writing.
- Visual and sensory stimulation (including video) should be used to excite pupils to write.
- When planning writing sometimes use a senses chart so that pupils consider for example what a character: saw, heard, smelt, touched, tasted.