



1. INTRODUCTION

This policy document is written after consultation with the teaching staff and the Governor with responsibility for Literacy and is presented to the Local Education Authority and the Governing Body in the Autumn term 2006.

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 National Literacy 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.

The Literacy coordinator: Julie Hakner KS1 Carolyn Baker KS2

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 sessions in order to teach and refine the skills of text composition.

Writing Policy

Sept 2004 updated Dec 2006



- 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.
- Opportunities to listen to quality Literacy in 'class novel' time.

THE TEACHING OF WRITING.

Writing Policy

Sept 2004 updated Dec 2006



In Molescroft Primary School, we follow the National Literacy Strategy Framework for Teaching 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.

In KS1, they are taught how to create a coherent sequence of ideas.

In KS2, 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

In KS1, children are taught how to represent their ideas in sentences which they are made aware of through reading.

In KS2, 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

In KS1, 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.

In KS2, 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 National Literacy Strategy Framework 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.

During the transition phases to the new literacy strategy, teachers are encouraged to integrate the new planning suggestions into their present planning. 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 DFES 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.

Writing Policy

Sept 2004 updated Dec 2006



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 KS1 and a KS2 **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 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. Word and Sentence level work is also identified.

The Independent section explains what the children will be doing in the 20 minutes

In the Guided Writing section, teachers are encouraged to identify a specific group and what teaching method they will employ-i.e. teacher-demonstrating/teacher scribing/supported composition.

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

There is an Issues/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 Hour. 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. There are several DFES Literacy materials which are used regularly within the Literacy lessons which are investigative-based.

KS1

The National Literacy Strategy "**Playing with Sounds**" provides activities for whole class and group teaching of interactive phonics.

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.

Writing Policy

Sept 2004 updated Dec 2006



The National Literacy Strategy 'Spelling Bank' book is also specific to KS2 and again provides investigative-style units 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.

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 training, 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 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

Writing Policy

Sept 2004 updated Dec 2006

(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 in 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:

- 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 Word/Sentence level 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 throughout the week if appropriate. 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.

We have agreed as a staff however, that this extended time will not be on Friday as this is not the optimum time in the week to expect children to be at their most creative!

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 works hard to find cross-curricular links so that the writing skills learnt in Literacy can be used appropriately in other subjects. For example, in Year 3/4, non-chronological reports are taught in Literacy which is particularly useful in Science when they have to write a report about a particular creature's habitat. Each subject will maintain its integrity

Writing Policy

Sept 2004 updated Dec 2006



however with for example, History skills being taught in History and Literacy skills being taught in Literacy. As Writing skills are so important in many other subjects however, we 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 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 KS1, as well as following the Literacy Strategy Framework word, sentence and text level objectives, teachers also use ideas from the Literacy Strategy 'Developing Early Writing' book.

In KS2, as well as following the Literacy Framework Word and Sentence level 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 writers. 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'.

Writing Policy

Sept 2004 updated Dec 2006



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 Word level objectives concerning spelling within the Literacy Hour.

In KS1, teachers use The National Literacy Strategy Framework, the National Literacy Strategy Progression in Phonics activities and Developing Early Writing spelling ideas to support the development of spelling.

In KS2, teachers use The National Literacy Strategy Framework and The National Literacy Strategy 'Spelling Bank' units in order to teach the Spelling objectives.

The Proof-Reading System.

Within the Literacy Hour, 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 LEA 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 Hour, 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 Hour, 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 are again giving 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 and does not take in to account any other factor. For example, if the title is 'I can use powerful verbs' the teacher only marks the verbs used within the writing. 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

Writing Policy

Sept 2004 updated Dec 2006



aim that in the next lesson, the children are given 3 minutes to read the marking and respond to it in their books. The teacher then re-evaluates the piece of work and puts TA if achieved. If the child still does not understand, then the teacher may take some time out of the lesson to discuss the issue or he/she may write on their Literacy plan which children struggled in order to inform planning.

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 which is colourful and eye-catching. 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 3 minutes to improve the work in that chosen area. As 3 minutes is not a long time, the teacher may identify just a small section of writing to improve. 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.

Formal Assessment of Writing.

Writing Policy

Sept 2004 updated Dec 2006



Every term, each class is given a writing assessment which is then marked according to National Curriculum levels. There is one Writing assessment for KS1 classes and one for KS2. The writing assessments are narrative questions and follow the style of the KS2 English SATS. Before each assessment, the teacher teaches a 'warm up' session in which he/she reminds the class of different writing techniques and strategies. The actual question is not discussed however.

The writing assessments are then marked and levelled. One or two writing targets are set for each child from the assessment and conveyed to the child. 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.

This latest assessment is filed in our Assessed Writing Folders and the last assessment is put in to the child's individual Assessed Writing essellette folder.

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 May of each year, Year 3, 4 and 5 children also sit their Optional SATs tests in order to gain a Level in Writing.

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 Literacy Strategy-Framework for Teaching*, DfES, London 1998

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

DfES *The National Literacy Strategy-Progression in Phonics*, DfES London 1999

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

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



6. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

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

Writing targets set after each assessment 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 so that they can be accommodated within the Literacy lesson.

Spelling

For certain children, it may be relevant to follow a more structured phonics and spelling scheme in order to meet their specific learning needs. These children are sometimes withdrawn from lessons in order to follow the PAT scheme- Phonological Awareness Training. The children are taught by Teaching Assistants who have the relevant experience in teaching PAT. PAT links the teaching of phonics, spelling and reading successfully and was recommended by SENSS (Special Educational Needs Support Services) PAT follows the following stages:

- A child learns a new spelling pattern (this varies according to the stage but may be an initial consonant blend etc) The child then investigates words that contain the new spelling pattern.
- The child then reads 20 words containing the new spelling pattern and is tested on the spelling of 10 out of 20 words.
- The teacher then dictates 5 sentences which contain the key words investigated and these are checked.
- If the child is successful, they move on to the next spelling pattern.

Star Spell is also used in school which is a structured, interactive computer programme. The use of coloured transparencies aids spelling in some cases as does the teaching of Rainbow writing.

7. INSET

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

8 LIST OF APPENDICES

- 1a. KS1 Short Term Planning Literacy plan
- 1b. KS2 Short Term Planning Literacy plan.

Molescroft Primary School

Writing Policy

Sept 2004 updated Dec 2006

2. KS2 Proof-reading System.

3. Target cards

