



Key Principles for Writing

VAT Spelling & Vocabulary Programme

It is important to recognise:

- although, writing skills are enhanced by reading, they need to be explicitly taught in their own right, even to strong readers.
- Pupils' ideas for writing are developed through well-planned opportunities for oracy.
- We need to explicitly teach the difference between spoken and written language

VAT Writing Sequences

Core elements in our teaching sequence:

- Clear audience and purpose shared at the outset
- Based on rich quality texts – pupils explore author intent through access to and analysis of quality texts
- Lesson sequences which explicitly teach writing skills and techniques followed by opportunities to practise techniques at word, sentence and paragraph level.
- Writing techniques should be modelled before pupils practice them (I do, we do, you do)
- Grammar teaching will be closely linked to identified purpose for writing with examples drawn from quality texts.
- Accurate assessment of pupils' work and feedback that focuses on specific next steps to inform both pupil response and subsequent teaching.
- The ability to plan and edit work is fundamentally important for creating coherent pieces so time and effort must be spent on developing this part of the process.

We believe:

- All pupils can develop the tools necessary to communicate their thoughts effectively for a range of purposes. Every pupil needs ownership of their writing and a sense that their voice will be heard by the reader. Promoting individual creativity and a sense of play encourages enjoyment and satisfaction in writing.

What do we want our English teaching to achieve?

We follow the National Curriculum for English and therefore aim to ensure that all pupils:

- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening, making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate

References:

National Curriculum (Revised 2014)
Educational Endowment Foundation: Improving Literacy in KS1/KS2
The Writing Revolution – Hochman and Wexler
CLPE – Writing Scales
Voice 21

The fundamental importance of transcription skills

- Until transcription skills are fluent, pupils will have insufficient cognitive capacity to give to composition.
- Handwriting, spelling and vocabulary must be explicitly taught and valued across the curriculum.
- Extensive practice will allow these skills to become automatic.

How will we assess if our pupils have gained sufficient understanding? Do they:

- Know what they want to say and write with confidence for different purposes and audiences?
- Take pride in their writing and talk about how they have been effective?
- Spell and write with reasonable fluency, so that they can concentrate on composition?

What about greater depth? Do they:

- Have a strong awareness of audience and write with a reader's eye to check that the message is effectively conveyed
- Know how different texts are structured so that they can create their own structures that are appropriate to audience and purpose.
- Have good understanding of grammar, varying and controlling sentence structure with ease to create different language effects
- Show an ability to imitate or experiment with different styles of writing
- Show an original style or "voice"

WRITING AT ST JAMES

'Writing is an important lifelong skill. Children need to learn to write so they can communicate and express themselves' (National Curriculum- July 2014)

'You can make anything by writing.' (CS Lewis, Author)

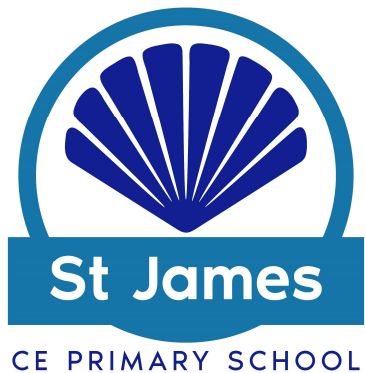
VISION

At St James, we recognise that writing is a natural extension of speech and reading, offering a blank canvas for children's imagination and a way to share their unique perspective with others. We believe that making secure connections between reading and writing is key and our aim is to develop pupils who 'read as a writer' and 'write as a reader'.

INTENT

At St. James, we help our children to develop into articulate and imaginative communicators, who are well equipped with the basic skills they need to become lifelong learners; who have mastered the craft of writing. Pupils at St. James will leave as skilled communicators with a passion for the spoken and written word having been exposed to a wide range of high-quality texts. Writing opportunities will be inspiring, enjoyable and with genuine purposes and outcomes. Through direct teaching of words, we will develop a curiosity surrounding vocabulary and language where pupils will develop a sophisticated bank of vocabulary that they are able to draw upon both within writing and conversation.

We want every child to master the key skills of punctuation, sentence structure, transcription and spelling so they are able to communicate effectively through a range of text types. Through the teaching of this, it will equip pupils to independently select and adapt their language and style to suit a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.



The high quality texts that we have carefully chosen enable pupils to ask and answer questions within both fiction and non-fiction. This natural curiosity inspires the children's purposeful writing.

- High-quality fiction and non fiction texts provide children with the opportunity to demonstrate and ask(and answer) questions.

For example:

What do you think the legend of Black Rock is?

- The Secret of Black Rock – Year 1

What curse do you think they may be referring to? – The Curse of the Maya – Year 6



Writing provides the opportunity for the children of St. James to go on many adventures throughout their time at school as well as taking their reader on their own adventure through their writing.

- Fiction texts are specifically chosen to give children a range of experiences - pupils are encouraged to make connections between what they read and their learning in class: - Hermelin – Year 2

- Emma Jane's Aeroplane – Year 1

- Pupils read about a range of inspirational people/events with the hope that they are inspired by their adventures.

- Marcy and the Riddle of the Sphinx – Year 3

- Paddington – Year 1

Our writing spine has carefully designed to enable all pupils to see themselves and others in the literature they read. Once they have 'read as a writer,' they can then 'write as a reader' to enable their audience to feel empathy for the characters and any topics they are writing about.

Texts are specifically chosen to encourage children to develop a sense of empathy whilst reading and promote thinking and action in their writing.

- Lost and Found – Year 1
- There's an Rang-Tan in my bedroom – Year 3
- Suffragette: The Battle for Equality – Year 4



Writing at St. James