

# Guidelines for the Teaching of Writing at Great Wishford Primary School

## Aims:

- To inform teachers and support staff in the school with regard to school guidelines, procedures and suggested teaching strategies to ensure that all children in our school make good progression in their understanding of sentence building, structures and punctuation.
- To raise and sustain high standards in writing throughout each key stage (EYFS, KS1, LKS2 and UKS2).
- To ensure consistency of practice and continuity of learning between classes.

## Key principles:

- Before they can **write** sentences, children need to be able to **speak** in complete sentences. Therefore, throughout the school, at every stage, writing should be preceded by opportunities to talk and compose sentences orally.
- Teachers and Teaching Assistants should model good sentence structure in a progressive program.
- Children need to be given motivation to write. Therefore, we as teachers need to make maximum use of stimuli such as special experiences (outings, visits, projects etc.) and give children opportunities to write for a real audience and purpose.
- Wherever possible, children must receive prompt feedback and given opportunities both to reflect on and improve their own writing and also be involved in setting their own targets for future development. (See marking policy. Note: clear objectives should be set, with specific success criteria outlined to guide children in what they need to do to achieve success in these objectives.)
- While teaching of literacy skills takes place in discrete Literacy lessons, writing is a fundamental learning skill and therefore children should be encouraged to practice and develop the skills taught in other subjects, with opportunities to write across the curriculum. Wherever possible, children especially in Key Stage 2) should undertake at least one piece of cross-curricular writing each week, which reinforces either the current or previously taught Literacy writing focus. (eg. instruction writing in D&T, reports or persuasive writing in History/ Geography/ R.E.) Teachers should ensure that sufficient time, prompts and scaffolds are provided to enable children to maintain the same high standard of writing in their cross-curricular work as in their Literacy work.
- Teachers should help to facilitate transition from one class to the next be engaging in meeting and transfer of assessment tools, data, work etc. (including previous writing assessments with Success for Writing grids.)
- Wherever possible, models should be drawn from the children's own writing and could be taken from children in older classes.

## Planning

Since each class teacher in the school is responsible for a different age-group, it is recognized that there will of necessity be differences in the balance of activities planned, according to the age and ability of the pupils concerned. The following guidelines are intended to support continuity and cohesion in the school, to share good practice, to support differentiation and to enable teachers to plan appropriately for the progress of every child, taking into account different learning styles. A format has been agreed for medium planning, setting out differentiated objectives for each strand and ability group. (Refer to guidelines on "What makes good planning?" Appendix 3)

## Resources:

Key documents used in the planning and assessment of writing in our school are:

Letters and Sounds  
Speaking and Listening 'lunchbox'  
The National Literacy Strategy  
The Renewed Framework for Literacy  
Grammar for Writing  
Developing Early Writing  
Success for Writing (Wiltshire Council)

Letterland Handwriting scheme (Note: some aspects of this have been adapted for our school and the school has produced our own guidelines for teaching joined handwriting.)  
Nessy Spelling Programme

Our school addresses the 12 strands of the Renewed Framework for Literacy in the following ways:

**Strands 1 to 4: Speaking, Listening and responding, Group Discussion and Interaction, Drama**

Termly (or curriculum-linked) targets are displayed in each classroom and opportunities planned across the curriculum to develop the children's skills in speaking, listening, group discussion and drama.

**Assessment criteria:** APP in Speaking and Listening

**Strand 5: Word Recognition**

Word recognition is a key skill in reading and spelling and is taught in both Guided Reading and Shared reading sessions and also in daily "Superspellers" lessons (see below, strand 6).

**Assessment criteria and tools:** Reading for Success, NFER and Salford reading tests, Letters and Sounds phases.

**Strand 6: Word Structure and Spelling**

This strand is principally taught in differentiated "Superspellers" groups. Children meet daily after or before lunch in small groups (grouped according to Vernon spelling age as well as teacher assessment across the term). Teaching in these groups makes use of a range of strategies using the structure of a 'Letters and Sounds' lesson and materials such as the Nessy learning program, Wesford dyslexia screening key strategies and screening materials (for less able or SEN) and Spellodrome (for the most able).

**Assessment tools:** Vernon Spelling test, Nessy Assessment, Weekly spelling tests, Letters and Sounds phases, Success for Writing (AF8)

**Strands 7 & 8: Understanding and interpreting texts, Engaging with and responding to texts**

These strands will be taught in differentiated Guided Reading sessions (followed up by Reading Journal homework in Key Stage 2 and able Key Stage 1) and also in Class Literacy lessons. Teachers should, wherever possible, use opportunities across the curriculum to embed and practise these skills.

**Assessment criteria:** Success for Reading

**Strands 9 & 10: Creating and shaping texts, Text Structure and organisation**

These strands will be taught principally in daily class Literacy lessons and applied through opportunities for writing in other areas of the curriculum. In Kingfisher, Skylark and Osprey, Class teachers will make use of the Green folders containing progression documents and non-fiction genre learning mats to develop and provide children with success criteria to support their organisation of different types of texts. Although the teaching of Literacy in EYFS is more concerned with phonics, reading skills, letter formation and sentence structure, there will be some teaching of text-level objectives through shared reading and writing and other class activities.

**Assessment criteria:** Success for Writing, APP in writing (AFs 1,2, 3, 4, 7)

**Strand 11: Sentence Structure and Punctuation**

Sentence structure and punctuation form the core of teaching in class Literacy lessons. We aim to address some aspect of these strands in most or all Literacy lessons, using strategies such as "Punctuation Detectives" (see below) as warm-up activities. Class and group teaching objectives should be formulated from the previous term's Writing assessment, from which individual or group targets are set. Children's individual writing targets should be recorded in the front of their Literacy books. In addition, children may be given opportunities to practise these skills in independent activities during Guided Reading and should be able to refer to their targets and to support materials (eg. VCOP) when writing in other areas of the curriculum. All classes should display relevant VCOP materials and provide models of targeted skills foci (Refer to Appendix 4: VCOP materials).

Please refer to Appendix 1: Progression in Sentence Structure and Punctuation

**Assessment criteria:** Success for Writing, APP in writing (AF 5 and 6)

## **Strand 12: Presentation**

From Reception to Year 4, children will take part in regular handwriting lessons, in which correct letter formation and joins will be modeled and in which they will have opportunities to practise their handwriting. In Year 5 & 6, teaching of handwriting will continue as needed and children are given time to focus on improving their handwriting through targeted independent activities during Guided Reading. In addition, letter formation and presentation (including correct pencil/ pen grip, seating position etc.) will be modeled and taught alongside phonics in Superspellers or Letters and Sounds lessons and further reinforced through application of the marking policy and awarding of the school Handwriting awards/ stickers.

**Assessment criteria: Success for Writing, APP in writing**

## **SEN/ Vulnerable/ EAL/ AGT**

In addition to Wave 2 differentiation and streaming in Superspellers, children identified as having special educational needs in Literacy will be supported through targeted intervention programmes as required, delivered in small groups or one-to-one. Children may be supported within the classroom or withdrawn for specific teaching of targeted skills by experienced teaching assistants or the SENCO. In some cases, children may join other classes for a series of lessons to revisit areas of difficulty or extend their learning into new areas (this is particularly relevant in the case of Able, Gifted and Talented pupils in younger classes or pupils who need to revisit an area because maturity, behaviour or SEN issues had previously formed a barrier to the teaching and learning.)

## **Strategies and Materials for Effective Teaching of Sentence Structure and Punctuation**

### **Owl Class: (Reception and Year 1 pupils still operating on EYFS programme.)**

In the early stages of writing, a variety of strategies may be used to suit the pace and style of learning of different pupils. Children need to develop their ability to compose a sentence orally and then to hold it in memory until they can write it down.

Initially, until their knowledge of phonics, spelling of high frequency words and letter formation is developed to a point where children are able to attempt to spell words themselves, children will need to have all or part of their sentences scribed by an adult. Therefore most writing activities will take place in small groups. In teaching, a variety of simple sentence structures will be modeled and class teaching may involve the teacher, together with the children, identifying/ correcting incorrect or incomplete sentences to model the process of self-correction/ editing.

To record children's own sentences, the following strategies may be used:

- Adult scribes
- "Rainbow writing" – adult writes in yellow pen, children copies over adult's writing.
- "Copy under" - Adult scribes on alternate lines and child copies under.
- "Copy from" - Adult scribes on whiteboard or separate piece of paper and child copies.
- "Cloze" or "Complete" – Adult scribes initial part of sentence for child to complete or adult supplies some words for child to copy as needed.
- "Breakthrough" method – Words are supplied for child to order into a sentence (this requires a level of proficiency in word recognition/ decoding.) This could involve use of Clicker 5 program.
- Individual pupil prompts such as finger spacers, letter prompts etc.

Children will be taught:

- when to use lower case and capital letters (ie. no capitals within words, capitals to start a sentence, capitals for names and for the pronoun 'I');
- use of full stops, question marks and exclamation marks to demarcate sentences;
- what is a word? Grouping letters to form words;
- to leave spaces between words;
- when to start a new line – the difference between a line and a sentence (care should be taken with use of poetry at this stage, which should be read to the children rather than written);
- what is a sentence? (At this stage, children will simply be discriminating between complete and incomplete sentences).

Teaching will involve:

- using awareness of the structure of a sentence to predict words in shared reading;
- discriminating between complete and incomplete sentences (does it make sense?);
- identifying which sentences are questions, which are statements and which are exclamations;
- ordering familiar words to form sentences (eg. using Clicker 5);
- completing unfinished sentences or suggesting words that might 'fit' in a gap;
- reading and answering simple questions;
- identifying which of a set of words should begin with capital letters;
- shared writing of several sentences;
- identifying and correcting punctuation errors in simple sentences (ie. capital letters, full stops, question marks and exclamation marks);
- Sequencing sets of simple sentences in time order.

Teachers should model more than 1 sentence at a time, so that children learn when to end and begin new sentences, that a line is not the same as a sentence and that they do not need to start a new line with every new sentence.

At this stage, the majority of class teaching will focus on phonics, letter formation or word and sentence level objectives.

### **Kingfisher Class (Years 1 and 2) and Year 1 Owl Class who have progressed onto KS1 curriculum:**

Children will begin to use VCOP displays to support effective writing. At this stage, children will:

- continue to develop their understanding of simple sentences and will be introduced to conjunctions used to form compound sentences (**for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so**);
- begin to learn more of the terms used to describe the parts of a sentence, such as (nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs and conjunctions);
- continue to consolidate their understanding of sentence punctuation (capital letters, full stops, question marks and exclamation marks);
- be introduced to a wider range of punctuation including speech marks and commas in a list;
- begin to use a wider range of descriptive vocabulary. (Foci for powerful vocabulary will include using a range of powerful verbs, adjectives and adverbs);
- be aware of the need for grammatical agreement in speech and writing, matching verbs to nouns/ pronouns correctly;
- use verb tenses with increasing accuracy in speaking and writing (eg. *catch/ caught, see/saw*);
- be taught to use openers including time and place adverbials;
- organise their writing into paragraphs, initially according to a change of subject in non-fiction writing and then according to a change of time or place in recounts or narrative and finally for a change of speaker (more able) in dialogue;
- More able children in year 2 will begin to use a wider range of conjunctions (eg. because, when, if, as, while, after) to form complex sentences.

Teaching will involve:

- Identifying complete and incomplete sentences (and editing/ correcting incomplete sentences);
- Identifying particular word groups within sentences (eg. underline/ write all the verbs).
- "Punctuation Detectives" – identifying missing punctuation from sentences;
- Reading and discussing sentence punctuation and word choices in shared, group and individual reading;
- Practising turning statements into questions or using questions to help structure the answer in a statement;
- Choosing the correct form of a word to fit a sentence (eg. verb tenses, singular/ plural);
- Improving simple sentences by adding descriptive vocabulary or changing word order;
- Practising writing sentences using targeted vocabulary, such as adverbs, adjectives or conjunctions;
- Use of VCOP displays to self-correct own work or that of a peer and suggest future targets for improvement;
- Weekly opportunities for extended writing;

- Close attention to presentation, pencil grip, seating, correct letter formation and directionality (ie. direction of writing, no reversals);
- Explicitly encouraging children to identify their own next steps for learning, targets and strategies to help themselves move their learning forward.

### **Skylark Class: (Years 3 and 4)**

Building on their previous learning, children will:

- continue to develop the range of sentence structures and punctuation they are using in their writing;
- be introduced to a wider range of conjunctions. Teaching will address connectives used to link parts of a sentence (conjunctions) and also those used to link different parts of a text, such as forming links between paragraphs;
- begin to collect suitable vocabulary, openers and connectives appropriate to particular genres, with reference to a broadening range of genres, including persuasive writing;
- be introduced to sentence openers other than time and place adverbials, such as –ing words used as connectives and –ed words used as adjectives;
- begin to use a wider range of punctuation within the sentence. Teaching will address the uses of apostrophes for possession and omission, parentheses (pairs of commas, dashes or brackets) etc;
- begin to use terms such as *clause*, *phrase* and *adverbials* to discuss the functions of parts of a sentence;
- begin to understand 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person verbs and how/when they are used;
- be more explicitly taught how new paragraphs are used to indicate a change of speaker, time, place, subject or character focus;
- More able writers will also begin to experiment with manipulating the order of clauses in complex sentences and using commas to clarify or semi-colons in place of conjunctions.

Teaching will involve :

- Identifying complete and incomplete sentences (and editing/ correcting incomplete sentences);
- Identifying particular word groups within sentences (eg. underline/ write all the verbs).
- “Punctuation Detectives” – identifying missing punctuation from sentences;
- Reading and discussing sentence punctuation and word choices in shared, group and individual reading;
- Practising turning statements into questions or using questions to help structure the answer in a statement;
- Choosing the correct form of a word to fit a sentence (eg. verb tenses, singular/ plural);
- Improving simple sentences by adding descriptive vocabulary or changing word order;
- Practising writing sentences using targeted vocabulary, such as adverbs, adjectives or conjunctions;
- Use of VCOP displays to self-correct own work or that of a peer and suggest future targets for improvement;
- Weekly opportunities for extended writing;
- Close attention to presentation, pencil grip, seating, correct letter formation, directionality (ie. direction of writing, no reversals) and joins;
- Explicitly encouraging children to identify their own next steps for learning, targets and strategies to help themselves move their learning forward.
- Use of “Super Sentence” strategies to improve/ edit sentences.
- Differentiation of activities within lessons for guided group (learning new material with adult input), scaffolded group (practising previously taught skills that need to be embedded prior to independent work) and application group (applying new skills in independent writing.)
- Changing text from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> person or 3<sup>rd</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup> person etc.
- Adapting the form/ genre of a piece of writing (eg. play script to narrative, recount to instructions);

### **Osprey Class: (Years 5 and 6)**

Building on their previous learning, children will:

- develop their use of a range of simple, compound and complex sentence structures;
- develop confidence in selecting vocabulary and sentence structures that are appropriate to particular genres of writing and adapting their style of writing according to purpose and audience;
- develop their confidence in using accurate sentence punctuation. (Teaching will concentrate increasingly on correct use of a range of punctuation to clarify meaning within sentences, including colons, semi-colons and commas to show relative clauses);
- be encouraged to use appropriate language to talk about the parts of sentences (*eg. main and subordinate/ dependent clauses, subject, object etc.*);
- More able children may begin to manipulate the subject and object of a sentence to form passive sentences.

Teaching will involve:

- Identifying complete and incomplete sentences (and editing/ correcting incomplete sentences.);
- Identifying particular word groups within sentences (eg. underline/ write all the verbs).
- Identifying main and dependent clauses and classifying sentences as simple, compound or complex;
- “Punctuation Detectives” – identifying missing punctuation from sentences;
- Reading and discussing sentence punctuation and word choices in shared, group and individual reading;
- Experimenting with and describing ways in which word order and punctuation can affect the meaning of a sentence;
- Improving simple sentences by adding descriptive vocabulary or changing word order;
- Practising writing sentences using targeted vocabulary (adverbs, adjectives, conjunctions, adverbial phrases) or punctuation;
- Using success criteria to identify the style/ genre of a piece of writing and formulating own success criteria for writing in a particular genre/ style;
- Explicitly encouraging children to identify their own next steps for learning, targets and strategies to help themselves move their learning forward;
- Use of VCOP displays to self-correct own work or that of a peer and suggest future targets for improvement;
- Weekly opportunities for extended writing in Literacy and/or other curriculum areas;
- Timed planning and writing tasks to develop children’s speed, fluency and confidence in writing in the the full range of fiction/ non-fiction genres;
- Close attention to presentation, pencil grip, seating, correct letter formation, directionality (ie. direction of writing, no reversals) and joins;
- Changing text from 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> person or 3<sup>rd</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup> person etc;
- Adapting the form/ genre of a piece of writing (eg. play script to narrative, recount to instructions, narrative to newspaper report);
- Use of “Super Sentence” strategies to improve/ edit sentences;
- Differentiation of activities within lessons for guided group (learning new material with adult input), scaffolded group (practising previously taught skills that need to be embedded prior to independent work) and application group (applying new skills in independent writing.)

# Appendix 1: Progression in Sentence Structure and Punctuation (Renewed Framework for Literacy)

## Foundation Stage

- Write their own names and other things such as labels and captions and begin to form simple sentences sometimes using punctuation.

## Year 1

- Compose and write simple sentences independently to communicate meaning.
- Use capital letters and full stops when punctuating simple sentences.

## Year 2

- Write simple and compound sentences and begin to use subordination in relation to time and reason.
- Compose sentences using tense consistently (present and past).
- Use question marks, and use commas to separate items in a list.

## Year 3

- Show relationships of time, reason and cause through subordination and connectives.
- Compose sentences using adjectives, verbs and nouns for precision, clarity and impact.
- Clarify meaning through the use of exclamation marks and speech marks.

## Year 4

- Clarify meaning and point of view by using varied sentence structure (phrases, clauses and adverbials).
- Use commas to mark clauses, and use the apostrophe for possession.

## Year 5

- Adapt sentence construction to different text-types, purposes and readers.
- Punctuate sentences accurately, including using speech marks and apostrophes.

## Year 6

- Express subtle distinctions of meaning, including hypothesis, speculation and supposition, by constructing sentences in varied ways.
- Use punctuation to clarify meaning in complex sentences.

## Year 6/7

- Extend their use and control of complex sentences by deploying subordinate clauses effectively.
- Use punctuation to convey and clarify meaning and to integrate speech into longer sentences.
- Use standard English confidently and consistently in formal writing, with awareness of the differences between spoken and written language structures.

## Appendix 2: Super Sentence Strategies

Can you write really powerful sentences? Here are 14 top tips for turning those boring sentences into "Super Sentences"!

1. Try adding **adjectives** to describe **people, places** and **things**.
2. Try changing boring verbs for **powerful verbs**.
3. Join two ideas with a **connective**.
4. Add **adverbs** to show how something happened.
5. Add information about **when** or **where** something happened.
6. Use a "**set of three**" to extend or add interest to your sentence.
7. Start your sentence with an "**ing**" word (eg. Panting..., Wondering..., Grasping...)
8. Start your sentence with an "**ed**" word (eg. Tired..., Frustrated..., Exhausted..., Relieved...).
9. Add a **simile** to your sentence. (eg. As silently as a falling feather...)
10. Show your character's feelings by using another word for "said", adding an adverb - or both!
11. Reveal more about a character by adding what they are doing when they are speaking.
12. Drop in some description to show how a character is feeling or behaving.
13. Use a question to directly address your reader.
14. Use an exclamation to create effect.

## Appendix 3: What Makes Good Planning?

## **Appendix 4: Glossary of terms**

**Note: A more comprehensive glossary is given in Section 3 of the National Literacy Strategy folder.**

Word	Definition
<b>adjective</b>	<p>A word or phrase which is added or linked to a noun to describe or <i>modify</i> it. It may come before the noun (eg. <i>the red dress</i>) or after it (eg. <i>the dress was red</i>). There are different sorts of adjectives:</p> <p><b>numbers</b> (six, three, hundreds), <b>quantity</b> (more, all, some of, half), <b>quality</b> (relates to colour, size, smell, etc.) <b>possessive</b> (my, his, their, your), <b>interrogative</b> (which, whose, what), <b>demonstrative</b> (this, these, that, those).</p> <p>Adjectives have different degrees of intensity:  <b>Nominative</b> names the quality (eg. tall)  <b>Comparative</b> describes the degrees of a quality (eg. taller, less tall)  <b>Superlative</b> describes the limit of a quality (eg. tallest)</p> <p>Many adjectives can be transformed into adverbs by the addition of –ly.</p>
<b>adverb</b>	<p>A word which describes or modifies a verb and describes <i>how</i>, <i>where</i> or <i>when</i> the action is performed. Many adverbs have the –ly suffix. These are some categories of adverb:</p> <p><b>manner</b> <i>how</i> an action is performed (eg. happily, lazily, slowly, truthfully)  <b>time</b> <i>when</i> an action is performed (eg. now, later, yesterday, soon, annually)  <b>place</b> <i>where</i> an action is performed (eg. here, nearby, there)  <b>degree</b> modifies another adverb (eg. very, really)</p>
<b>adverbial phrase</b>	<p>A phrase (group of words) that acts as an adverb, describing or modifying a verb. These can be in any of the above categories and can be used as effective sentence openers:  Eg. <i>With a flick of its tail...</i>  <i>In the next minute...</i> <i>All of a sudden...</i> <i>Just at that moment...</i>  <i>In the corner of the room...</i> <i>On the other side of the bridge...</i> <i>By the door...</i></p>
<b>apostrophe</b>	<p>A punctuation mark indicating:</p> <p><b>contraction / omission</b>– when two words are shortened into one. The apostrophe is placed where letters have been omitted. The contraction is less formal than the full form. (eg. <i>I'm</i>, <i>I've</i> <i>we've</i>). This can sound like ‘of’ (eg. <i>should've</i>). In negative forms, the verb is linked to not (eg. <i>didn't</i>, <i>couldn't</i>) If the short form is more common, the apostrophe may be dropped (eg. <i>phone</i>). It is also used for missing numbers (1997/ '97)</p> <p><b>possession</b> Originally the possessive form was shown by a noun and the word his – eg. Andrew his bath. This became contracted, so the ‘ marks the missing hi : Andrew’s bath. The rule came to be applied to all possessives marked by an s, except its. With a single noun or a collective noun, the apostrophe is before the s (eg. <i>the girl's</i>, <i>the children's</i>, <i>the people's</i>). When a plural is marked by an s, the apostrophe is added after the s (eg. <i>cats' tails</i>, <i>the girls' toilets</i>).</p>
<b>article</b>	<p>A word linked to a noun which may be definite (<i>the</i>) or indefinite (<i>a</i>, <i>an</i>). This indicates whether the speaker/ writer is referring to a particular individual, or is introducing a new one. (eg. <i>the man walked in</i>; <i>a man walked in</i>).</p>
<b>clause</b>	<p>A distinct part of a sentence including a verb. There are three different types:  <b>main</b> the main part of the sentence. This must make sense on its own.  <b>Subordinate</b> this gives more information about the main clause. Does not make sense on its own. It may come before or after a main clause.  Clauses can be abbreviated into <b>phrases</b> which do not have a verb: eg. <i>When they are happy</i>, <i>the children sing.</i> / <i>When happy</i>, <i>the children sing.</i></p>
<b>colon</b>	
<b>comma</b>	
<b>compound</b>	
<b>complex</b>	
<b>conjunction</b>	

<b>connective</b>	
<b>dash</b>	
<b>ellipsis</b>	
<b>exclamation mark</b>	
<b>genre</b>	
<b>hyphen</b>	
<b>metalanguage</b>	
<b>noun</b>	
<b>object</b>	
<b>paragraph</b>	
<b>parenthesis</b>	
<b>participle</b>	
<b>passive</b>	
<b>person</b>	
<b>phonics</b>	
<b>phrase</b>	
<b>preposition</b>	
<b>pronoun</b>	
<b>question mark</b>	
<b>semi-colon</b>	
<b>sentence</b>	
<b>singular</b>	
<b>speech</b>	
<b>syntax</b>	
<b>tense</b>	
<b>verb</b>	