



SUTTON CE (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Writing Policy

Approved by staff	☐	November 2025
Approved by Governors	☐	November 2026

1. Intention

At Sutton we strive to create an environment that will promote writing. Writing is one of the most important things that we teach in primary school. Almost every other area of the curriculum is assessed through writing; being an effective writer is crucial to academic and life-long success. Being able to communicate ideas successfully enables our learners to share their ideas with the wider world. By the time they leave us, it is our intention that our students are confident writers able to convey their ideas to a range of audiences and different purposes. Children will be able to communicate with confidence and clarity, drawing on a high level of understanding of the impact of punctuation, appropriate grammar and ambitious vocabulary. We will engage pupils in a wide range of stimulating writing opportunities supported by high quality texts across a range of genre.

2. Implementation

At Sutton we strive to ensure:

- Cultivate a passion for writing, making it enjoyable and purposeful.
- Develop pupils' ability to write coherently across a wide range of forms, audiences, and purposes.
- Enhance vocabulary, spelling, grammar, and punctuation through meaningful application in writing.
- Encourage creativity, imagination and independence in written expression.
- Teach pupils to plan, draft, revise and edit their work effectively.
- Ensure that writing across the curriculum supports subject knowledge without replacing it.

3. Teaching and learning style

We employ a balanced approach, ensuring consistency and progression across all year groups:

- **Modelled Writing:** teachers demonstrate the craft of writing, making thinking explicit.
- **Shared Writing:** collaborative sessions allow pupils to contribute to writing with adult guidance.
- **Guided Writing:** targeted support addresses specific skills and misconceptions.
- **Independent Writing:** pupils apply skills to authentic tasks with real purpose and audience.

Key pedagogical principles include:

- **Oracy and Oral Rehearsal:** frequent opportunities for discussion, debate, drama and sentence rehearsal support sentence fluency and vocabulary use.
- **Modelling and Scaffolding:** Each writing unit has a maximum of three grammatical teaching foci and uses visual models reduce cognitive load and support independence.
- **Practice and Repetition:** writing skills and grammatical structures are revisited in purposeful contexts to ensure retention.
- **Authentic Outcomes:** pupils produce work for real audiences where possible, enhancing motivation and pride.

4. What writing looks like at Sutton:

Preschool and Reception

- Language-rich environments with daily storytelling, rhymes, and quality texts.
- Developing pre-writing skills such as holding a pencil, drawing shapes, and developing hand-eye coordination, help prepare children for writing and enhance their fine motor abilities.
- Opportunities for mark-making, emergent writing, and role-play writing throughout the provision.
- Daily systematic phonics (Little Wandle) supports transcription in Reception.
- Shared writing, story scribing, and oral rehearsal (labels, captions, messages) embedded in play.

Key Stage 1

- Daily phonics and spelling sessions to secure spelling and transcription.
- Teaching sequences provide immersion in high-quality texts.
- Oral rehearsal, drama, and manipulatives support sentence sense and composition.
- Pupils develop a firm understanding of the foundations of writing and this grammatical knowledge is taught through the texts.
- Writing includes narratives, recounts, poetry, instructions, and reports.

Key Stage 2

- Pupils write with increasing complexity and independence across a range of purposes and audiences.
- Teaching sequences focus upon the application of grammar suited to that genre as well as providing a clear link to the topic that is being learnt.

- Explicit grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary teaching is embedded in context following the Writing Expectations (Appendix 1) for each year group. This ensure coverage but avoids cognitive overload.
- Pupils refine writing through the drafting, editing and publishing cycle.
- Writing opportunities include narratives, persuasive texts, explanations, reports, and poetry. Each stage of writing development is carefully supported to ensure progression, enabling all children to become confident and proficient writers.

5. The importance of acquisition of vocabulary at Sutton

Vocabulary is a strong indicator of reading success (National Literacy Trust, 2017). We know from research that the size of a child's vocabulary is the best predictor of success in future tests. Children with a poor vocabulary at five are four times more likely to struggle with reading in adulthood (Why Closing the Word Gap Matters: Oxford Language Report, 2018).

At Sutton, we also know that a good understanding of a wide range of vocabulary supports success across the whole national curriculum. Therefore pupils are regularly taught new vocabulary in all areas of the curriculum.

Developing vocabulary occurs in two ways:

- Through indirect instruction; using rich reading experiences to grow vocabulary 'naturally.' Paying attention to context to work out meaning and using background knowledge.
- Through direct 'robust' instruction. Good vocabulary instruction involves...
 1. Decisions about which words to teach
 2. Decisions and expertise around how to teach these words

Teachers that plan direct instruction for tier two words, as they can have a powerful impact on verbal functioning and be applied to a range of different situations (Beck et al, 2013). Throughout the curriculum at Sutton we ensure that acquisition of vocabulary is a priority. We incorporate the Word Aware approach (an evidenced based approach to improve vocabulary development) into every lesson and ensure that every working wall has this vocabulary displayed and explained.

Tier 3: words either limited to specific domains (think science and maths vocabulary for example) or extremely rare words.

Tier 2: words that tend to be used in written language and that are versatile/have high utility (e.g. occurrence, tended, haunting, fortune)

Tier 1: words typically found in oral language (likely to be known, used, or encountered without design)

Beck et al 2002.

6. Assessment

Formative Assessment in Writing

- Throughout each unit of writing teachers focus upon the grammatical features and structures that have been taught and include any that have been taught in previous units and year groups.
- There are opportunities for independent application throughout the unit and then during the final phase.
- At Sutton we ensure live marking and feedback happens in lessons. This means that any misconceptions can be picked up on and dealt with immediately and therefore there is a positive impact on the writing.
- At the end of each half term, staff are asked to assess a collection of independent writing from each child. They look at the overall composition of the writing as well as what has specifically been taught.
- We have formulated TAF grids at Sutton (see Appendix 2) to give guidance for teachers when assessing. We ask teachers to look at the collection as a whole to see if the statements are being met.

Summative Assessment in Writing

- Final levels at both the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 in writing are teacher assessed. These judgements may be externally moderated by the Local Authority. We also have members of staff that moderate for the Local Authority. This allows us to ensure that we have the expertise 'in house' that our judgements are correct.
- Teacher Assessments are recorded on Pupil Asset half termly. This tracks if children are working to/at/exceeding end of year expectations.

- This data is analysed half termly and actions are taken to ensure improvement.

References

- Department for Education. *National Curriculum in England: English programmes of study* (2014)
- Ofsted. *Education Inspection Framework* (EIF), particularly quality of education criteria (2023)
- Department for Education. *The Reading Framework: Teaching the Foundations of Literacy* (2023)
- Department for Education. *Teachers' Standards* (2011, updated)
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)



Name: _____

Working at the **expected standard** in **Spring term**

Extended pieces of independent work <i>(3 pieces per half term):</i>	Spring term 1	Spring term 1	Spring term 1	Spring term 2	Spring term 2	Spring term 2	End of term judgement
<i>Tick when child can:</i>							
• Can create many examples of simple setting and character descriptions							
• Can create a simple plot in narratives maintaining a consistent chronological order							
• Can consistently use and punctuate direct speech correctly (allow for corrections in editing process with some guidance from marking code)							
• Can use most nouns or pronouns appropriately to avoid repetition							
• Can use the present perfect form of a wide range of verbs in contrast to the past tense mostly correctly (<i>e.g. 'I've lived in this small village all my life.'</i>)							
• Can use many simple organisational devices including; paragraphs, heading, sub-headings							
• Can extend a range of many sentences with more than one clause by using a simple range of conjunctions (including, when, if, although, because)							
• Can indicate possession by using the possessive apostrophe with plural nouns mostly accurate							
• Can express time and cause by using many simple conjunctions, adverbs, prepositions							
• Can spell most simple homophones and explain how the spelling is different e.g Where/ wear							
• Can spell most year 3 and 4 words correctly							
• Can propose many changes when editing and redrafting (including the attempt of improving vocabulary, punctuation and spelling directed through marking codes)							
• Can consistently use legible handwriting with most attempts to join							

Name: _____

Working at a Greater Depth standard in Spring term							
Extended pieces of independent work (<i>3 pieces per half term</i>):	Spring term 1	Spring term 1	Spring term 1	Spring term 2	Spring term 2	Spring term 2	End of term judgement
<i>Tick when child can:</i>							
• Can use some words and phrases that suit the purpose and audience, drawn on what they have read independently (literary language, characterisation, structure)							
• Can use many cohesive devices to enhance the organisation of a theme through paragraphs							
• To make many deliberate ambitious word choices to add detail, effect and to engage the reader							
• Can mostly maintain tense throughout writing (including present perfect tense) with correct subject/ verb agreement							
• Can use many examples of advanced punctuation precisely to enhance meaning and is able to explain why they have used it in their writing.							

In order to fully maximise potential:

- Allow for children to independently gather ideas from: learning logs, checklists, teacher's modelled writing, displays and working walls.
- Only assess after the editing process

Definitions of language in statements used:

- **On occasion:** This statement is applied once or twice
- **Some:** This statement is applied under half of the time (aim to identify at least 3 pieces of evidence per text)
- **Many:** This statement is applied over half of the time
- **Most/ly:** This statement is applied for the majority of the time (allow for no more than 3 errors per text)
- **Consistently:** This statement is for every occasion and in every case
- **Independent/ly:** This statement is for the skill to be used without being prompted