



Riversdale Primary School

"A nurturing, ambitious and values led school."

Writing Policy

Date: 6th October 2025

Review Date: 5th October 2028



“Writing is the painting of the voice.”
Voltaire

Article 28:
You have the right to education.

Article 29:
You have the right to education which develops your personality, respect for other’s rights and the environment.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2013) National Curriculum in England: English Programmes of Study
- DfE (2023) The Reading Framework: Teaching the Foundations of Literacy
- DfE ‘The Writing Framework’ (2025) – Non-Statutory

INTENT

At Riversdale Primary School, the teaching of writing aims to inspire a love of the subject and equip pupils with the skills necessary to communicate effectively and accurately across a range of contexts, preparing them for secondary education and beyond.

We seek to develop pupils' ability to express ideas clearly, creatively, and purposefully, adapting their writing to suit different audiences and purposes. Central to this is the expansion of pupils' vocabulary, enabling them to enhance their writing by selecting words with precision, as well as applying relevant grammatical concepts suited to each genre. This is achieved through engagement with rich, diverse, and high-quality texts, where pupils encounter models of excellent writing that entertain, inform, and persuade, inspiring them to experiment with language, structure, and style.

We also aim to instil in pupils that writing is a process - one that involves drafting, editing, and refining, rather than producing a final piece in a single sitting. This approach not only builds their confidence and independence as writers, but also helps them become adaptable, developing their "writer’s voice" to suit different contexts and purposes. Finally, we aim to support pupils in ensuring that handwritten work is clear, legible, and presented with pride, reinforcing the value of presentation alongside content.

Through this process, we equip pupils with the tools to write thoughtfully and creatively, both in school and in the wider world.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Department for Education’s Writing Framework (2025) identifies key principles of effective writing instruction, including: establishing a positive writing culture; developing a well-sequenced and coherent curriculum; and ensuring that all teachers are well-trained to deliver high-quality writing instruction. These principles underpin our whole-school approach to writing at Riversdale.

At Riversdale, we recognise that a strong start in writing is essential to ensure all pupils become confident, capable, and creative writers. In line with the Writing Framework (2025), we place particular emphasis on the early development of writing skills, recognising that the foundations laid in the Early Years and Key Stage 1 are critical for long-term success.

High-quality teaching from the earliest stages supports pupils in developing key transcriptional skills - such as handwriting, spelling, and sentence construction—alongside the ability to express ideas clearly and

purposefully. By establishing secure routines, modelling effective writing, and providing meaningful opportunities to write, we aim to build pupils' motivation, stamina, and independence as writers throughout their learning journey.

EYFS IMPLEMENTATION

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, writing is taught through a combination of targeted programmes and structured routines that support both the mechanics and creativity of early writing:

- The Write Stuff EYFS Framework:
 - Experience lessons are used to develop ideas, build vocabulary, and foster enjoyment in writing.
 - The FANTASTICS (nine lenses for idea generation) are used to enhance oracy and vocabulary acquisition.
 - Vocabulary and ideas are presented using the CATALSTICS framework (quality talk into writing to enable the children to write vividly) to provide varied sentence structures and styles.
 - Pupils write for a range of purposes using the REALISTICS approach (exposing children to the real-world writing types making writing purposeful for the children) from The Write Stuff framework.
 - Oral sentence construction and rehearsal are embedded to support pupils in understanding sentence structure before writing.
- Letter-Join Handwriting Scheme:
 - Daily handwriting practice, including dictated sentences, reinforces links between spoken and written language.
 - Correct letter formation is taught through interactive animations and demonstrations to build muscle memory.
 - Fine motor development is supported through pre-writing patterns and activities that promote pencil grip and control.
 - Consistent handwriting habits are encouraged from the outset, ensuring clear and developmentally appropriate letter formation.
 - Pupils engage with multisensory tools, such as touch-screen activities and handwriting games, to make learning fun and accessible.
- Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised Scheme:
 - Grapheme/phoneme correspondence is explicitly taught and practised.
 - Pupils segment words into phonemes to spell phonetically plausible words.
 - Weekly sentence dictation reinforces decoding and encoding using decodable texts and vocabulary.
- Additional Strategies:
 - Writing is celebrated and shared to promote a culture of writing for pleasure.
 - Pupils write with non-permanent tools (e.g. pencils) to reduce anxiety around mistakes and build writing confidence.

KEY STAGE 1 AND 2 IMPLEMENTATION

From Year 1 onwards, pupils follow a structured and progressive writing curriculum, informed by The Write Stuff approach and supported by targeted resources and routines.

- The Write Stuff Whole-School Framework:
 - Units of learning are designed using The Write Stuff model and are inspired by high-quality texts, chosen to reflect the curriculum for each year group.
 - Lessons follow the consistent structure of Initiate – Model – Enable to develop understanding and application.
 - Experience lessons continue to build vocabulary and contextual understanding.
 - The FANTASTICS are used throughout to support idea generation, oral rehearsal, and vocabulary development.

- Pupils are explicitly taught to understand sentence structure and impact through oral construction, teacher modelling, and independent practice.
- The GRAMMARISTICS (grammar tools relevant to each writing purpose) are embedded to develop technical accuracy.
- Where appropriate, pupils are taught to apply the BOOMTASTICS (engaging literary techniques) to enhance the reader's experience.
- From Autumn 2, pupils produce at least one independently written, sustained piece every fortnight.
- Pupils review their work against personalised targets (not genre-specific), stored in the back of their writing books for easy reference.
- Pupils edit and improve their writing using purple pen, making revisions visible and meaningful.
- Self-assessment is encouraged, with pupils evaluating their writing against success criteria and individual targets.
- High standards in writing are expected across all subjects to ensure consistency in application.
- Letter-Join Handwriting Scheme:
 - Regular handwriting practice, including sentence dictation, reinforces spelling, handwriting, and sentence structure.
 - Correct letter formation is revisited through interactive demonstrations to support muscle memory and accuracy.
 - Pupils are taught joining strokes and techniques appropriate to their developmental stage.
 - Fine motor control, stamina, and pace are developed through targeted activities.
- Additional Strategies:
 - In Year 1, pupils continue to write with non-permanent tools to encourage experimentation without fear of error.
 - In Year 2, pupils transition to black biro to develop confidence and resilience when editing or correcting work.

CURRICULUM PROGRESSION

Based on the National Curriculum, senior and subject leaders at Riversdale have developed a carefully sequenced long-term plan, as well as detailed progression maps for different writing genres, that outline how writing knowledge and skills are built over time. This ensures pupils revisit and deepen their understanding of grammar, transcriptional fluency, and genre-specific features throughout their time at the school. Each year group's objectives are deliberately connected, increasing in complexity and independence to foster mastery and maintain alignment with National Curriculum expectations.

The writing curriculum is structured around three core purposes: to inform, to entertain, and to persuade. These purposes are explored through a wide range of genres, taught consistently across year groups to provide cohesion and continuity. While the purposes remain consistent, the genres provide varied and engaging contexts in which pupils can develop the specific skills needed for effective writing.

Genre-based teaching begins in the Early Years, where children begin to communicate for different purposes through spoken language, play, and mark-making. As they develop, there is an increasing emphasis on written expression. In Key Stage 1, pupils build upon their early experiences by exploring a broader range of genres, enabling them to understand how different writing styles and structures are suited to particular purposes and audiences. This progression continues into Key Stage 2, where pupils revisit and refine previously taught genres each year. With each revisit, there is an increasing focus on complex sentence construction, accurate grammar, effective vocabulary choices, and greater independence in planning, drafting, and editing their work.

To ensure comprehensive coverage of the National Curriculum, the curriculum progression map clearly identifies when and where each genre and grammatical concept is introduced, revisited, and deepened. This

long-term planning tool allows teachers to systematically build pupils' knowledge and skills over time, while providing regular opportunities to consolidate and apply their learning in meaningful contexts. It also supports adaptive teaching and responsive assessment, enabling staff to identify and address gaps in understanding, and to stretch pupils who are ready for greater challenge.

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE DOMAINS

At Riversdale, the teaching and assessment of writing are structured around three core domains: Transcription, Composition, and Editing. Each domain encompasses key skills and knowledge drawn from the National Curriculum and the DfE's Writing Framework (2025). These domains are revisited and developed progressively from EYFS through to Year 6.

Transcription:

Transcription refers to the technical accuracy of writing, including handwriting, spelling, and punctuation. It provides the foundation for fluent and legible writing.

- Spelling: Secure understanding of phonics, common exception words, and spelling rules, including morphology and etymology.
- Handwriting: Developing correct letter formation, legibility, fluency, and stamina.
- Punctuation: Accurately applying punctuation to support meaning, including full stops, commas, apostrophes, and more complex punctuation in KS2.
- Grammar: Applied within the transcription domain to ensure sentences are technically sound and syntactically accurate.

Composition:

Composition is the craft of writing—generating, organising, and structuring ideas for a specific audience and purpose. This domain includes both narrative and non-narrative forms.

- Idea generation and planning: Using discussion, model texts, and vocabulary development to prepare for writing.
- Sentence construction: Writing a range of sentence types, with increasing complexity and control.
- Vocabulary and language choices: Selecting words and phrases for clarity, precision, or effect.
- Structure and cohesion: Organising writing effectively at sentence, paragraph, and text level to ensure flow and coherence.
- Audience and purpose: Understanding and applying genre conventions, adapting tone and style to suit the context of writing.
- Oracy: oral rehearsal underpins written composition, supporting sentence fluency and structure.

Editing and Improving:

Editing is a key part of the writing process and helps pupils take ownership of their learning. This domain focuses on evaluating and refining written work.

- Proofreading: Identifying and correcting spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.
- Revision: Reworking content to improve clarity, accuracy, and impact (e.g. improving vocabulary or sentence structure).
- Self- and peer-assessment: Reflecting on writing using success criteria and personal targets.
- Independence and metacognition: Developing pupils' ability to identify strengths and next steps in their writing over time.

CURRICULUM PLANNING

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are immersed in a carefully chosen core text each week. Writing opportunities are embedded across the provision and adult-led sessions, with regular activities that build upon previously taught transcriptional and compositional skills. Planning in EYFS places a strong emphasis

on oral storytelling, vocabulary development, and purposeful mark-making, gradually leading to more structured written outcomes.

In Year 1, writing planning is structured to support a smooth transition from EYFS. During Autumn 1, pupils are introduced to two key writing genres, with a particular focus on simple sentence construction and building confidence as writers. From Autumn 2 onwards, pupils in Year 1 through to Year 6 are taught three distinct writing genres each half term. These are closely linked to high-quality texts that provide rich contexts for vocabulary development, grammatical understanding, and genre awareness. (See the Writing Long-Term Plan for full genre coverage and text choices.)

To support effective and consistent delivery across the school, Medium-Term Plans are provided for each year group. These plans clearly outline the focus genres, key grammatical objectives, and core texts for each unit. Teachers use these plans to ensure that technical writing skills and knowledge are explicitly taught, modelled, and practised.

From Autumn 2 in Year 1 onwards, each half term includes at least one independent written outcome. These are used to assess pupil progress and inform next steps in teaching. Year group-specific moderation forms are provided to support teachers in tracking National Curriculum objective coverage and ensuring accurate assessment of writing. In addition, planning formats are available to support staff in structuring units of work, sequencing learning effectively, and identifying opportunities for modelled, shared, and independent writing.

LESSON STRUCTURE

In EYFS, pupils are taught early literacy skills daily through short, purposeful inputs that spark curiosity and engage children in meaningful communication. These sessions are designed to inspire role play, storytelling, and early writing behaviours. Writing opportunities are embedded throughout the learning environment, with an emphasis on developing a positive attitude towards writing from the outset.

Children are given frequent opportunities to write for a range of purposes, both within adult-led activities and through continuous provision. This includes time for mark-making, independent writing, and using writing in imaginative contexts. A language-rich environment, supported by high-quality texts and focused vocabulary teaching, ensures that children are immersed in reading and oral language as essential foundations for writing.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, writing is taught through a clear and consistent teaching sequence comprising three distinct lesson types: writing lessons, experience lessons, and independent writing lessons. Each unit of learning includes a blend of these lesson types, carefully planned to meet the needs of the genre, purpose, and pupil cohort. The sequence and structure are outlined at the beginning of each unit.

Experience lessons are designed to build vocabulary, deepen conceptual understanding, and provide meaningful contexts for writing. These lessons may include immersive activities, discussion-based tasks, drama, or external experiences such as school trips. The aim is to ensure that all pupils have a shared bank of ideas and language to draw upon in their writing.

Writing lessons are structured into up to three 'learning chunks' per session. Each learning chunk follows the Initiate–Model–Enable format:

- Initiate – Stimulate thinking and introduce a grammatical concept or idea through high-quality stimuli (e.g. images, short videos, role play, or discussion).
- Model – The teacher explicitly models the construction of high-quality sentences, with a focus on vocabulary, grammar, and intended audience and purpose.

- Enable – Pupils apply their learning by writing their own sentence(s), using the model and grammar focus as a scaffold.

During the Enable phase, pupils with higher prior attainment or greater confidence are encouraged to Deepen the Moment by independently crafting an additional sentence. This extension focuses on adding depth or detail to a moment in the text, rather than progressing the narrative or structure further.

This sequence is typically repeated three times within a writing lesson, ensuring that pupils produce a minimum of three carefully constructed sentences per session. This approach supports consistent writing fluency, sentence-level accuracy, and vocabulary development over time.

Each unit culminates in an independent writing task, where pupils apply the taught skills and knowledge to produce a sustained piece of writing. This is used to inform assessment, celebrate progress, and identify next steps.

ASSESSMENT

To ensure that pupils make sustained progress in writing, assessment is embedded throughout the curriculum as an ongoing and responsive process. Teachers use a combination of formative and summative assessment methods to monitor pupils' development, inform planning, and provide targeted support.

Formative assessment takes place during lessons through marking, observational notes, verbal feedback, and peer or self-assessment activities. These ongoing assessments allow teachers to identify misconceptions, adjust teaching, and ensure that all pupils are supported and challenged appropriately.

Summative assessment is carried out through regular independent writing tasks, completed at the end of each unit or half term. These pieces provide an opportunity for pupils to demonstrate the skills, grammatical knowledge, and compositional techniques taught within the unit. Teachers assess these outcomes using year group-specific moderation forms, ensuring alignment with National Curriculum expectations and consistency across classes.

Pupils are actively involved in the assessment process through the use of individual writing targets, which support them in identifying strengths and areas for development. During editing and redrafting phases, pupils use purple pen to reflect on and improve their work, developing their metacognitive skills and ownership of learning. The development of reflective and evaluative skills is a key focus throughout the writing curriculum, encouraging pupils to become increasingly independent and confident writers.

INCLUSION

Riversdale is committed to ensuring that all pupils, regardless of background, ability, or need, have full access to the writing curriculum. Writing is a fundamental skill, and all children are entitled to high-quality teaching that enables them to make progress and experience success.

The writing curriculum is designed to be inclusive and ambitious, with appropriate adaptations and scaffolds in place to meet the needs of all learners. Tasks are adapted to ensure that pupils are both supported and appropriately challenged, including those with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL), and those identified as higher attaining.

Reasonable adjustments are made by the class teacher in consultation with the subject leader, the SENCo, and other relevant staff, as needed. These may include adjustments to task structure, resources, vocabulary support, use of assistive technology, adult support, or alternative methods of recording work.

The subject leader is responsible for reviewing curriculum content, assessment approaches, and teaching practices to ensure accessibility and inclusion. The SENCo will monitor the effectiveness of reasonable adjustments on a termly basis to ensure they continue to meet individual pupil needs.

All adaptations and support strategies are implemented in line with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy, SEND Policy, and EAL Policy.

WRITING IN THE ALTERNATIVE RESOURCE PROVISION (BASE):

Within our Alternative Resource Provision, we follow The Write Stuff EYFS approach, as this best suits the unique learning and communication needs of our pupils. The content, delivery, and pace of lessons are modified to ensure accessibility, engagement, and success for all learners. The curriculum prioritises high expectations while recognising the need for a personalised, structured, and language-rich environment.

Adaptations include:

- Visual Supports: A wide range of visuals is used consistently to aid understanding, including classroom displays, whiteboard prompts, story visuals, and adapted texts.
- Paced Delivery: Lessons are delivered at a slower pace, with plot points extended over several days where necessary to support comprehension and reduce cognitive load.
- Experience Days: Additional experience days are built into units to provide meaningful, contextual grounding for writing tasks.
- Structured Lessons: A simplified and predictable lesson structure is followed for each plot point, helping to build confidence and reduce anxiety through routine.
- Communication Opportunities: Speaking and listening are embedded throughout. Verbal interaction is planned using Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) principles, including the use of Blank Level questioning to develop comprehension and expressive language.
- Valuing Contributions: All pupil ideas are positively reinforced to foster confidence, creativity, and a sense of ownership. All ideas are seen as valid starting points for writing.
- Vocabulary Development: Key vocabulary is explicitly taught and reinforced using visual prompts, story-based learning, video clips, and contextual explanations.
- Symbol Support: Large-format FANTASTIC symbols are displayed prominently in classrooms and used as motivational stickers in pupil books to aid recognition and engagement.
- Modelling and Scaffolding: Each sentence is first modelled by an adult, followed by a group example, then pupil application. Scaffolds are tailored to need and may include:
 - Completing partially written model sentences.
 - Using sentence starters or symbol-supported prompts.
 - Adults scribing pupils' verbal sentences when appropriate.

These adaptations ensure that all pupils in the ARP access a high-quality writing curriculum that is meaningful, inclusive, and designed to meet them where they are—while continuing to support progress towards independence and self-expression.

HANDWRITING IN THE ALTERNATIVE RESOURCE PROVISION (BASE):

Handwriting is taught daily in the ARP through a structured and highly adapted approach, using the Year 2 Letter-join scheme as a foundation. Content and delivery are tailored to meet individual pupil needs, supporting both fine and gross motor development, handwriting fluency, and confidence.

Session Length:

Handwriting sessions take place each morning and last between 10–15 minutes, depending on pupil engagement and need.

Lesson Structure:

Gross Motor Warm-Up: Pupils take turns selecting a number on the interactive whiteboard (IWB), which reveals a movement-based activity. These warm-ups support gross motor coordination, body awareness, and turn-taking.

Fine Motor Skills Activity: Each session includes finger-stretching and hand exercises to strengthen fine motor control and support pencil grip development.

Writing Position Demonstration: Adults model correct seating position, pencil grip, and posture. Visual prompts are used consistently to reinforce expectations.

Teaching and Support Strategies:

- Visual supports are displayed on the IWB and around the room to guide each activity and reinforce learning.
- Clear, concise verbal instructions are given to support understanding and routine.
- Adults use targeted questioning to reinforce key concepts (e.g., “Where do we start writing this letter?”).
- Pupils engage in air tracing and trace letters on the IWB with their fingers before attempting independent writing.
- A variety of writing tools is available, including adapted pencil grips, smaller pencils, and chunky pens to support correct tripod grasp.
- Pupils who require additional support with letter sizing use large-lined or highlighted paper.
- Hand-over-hand support is provided where needed to scaffold correct movement patterns.
- Large printed letter models are used for visual and tactile reference.
- Tasks are broken into small, manageable steps to maintain focus and ensure success.
- Lesson pacing is flexible; sessions may be extended over 2–4 days to ensure mastery before moving on.
- Interactive IWB handwriting games are introduced after direct teaching to consolidate skills in a motivating, accessible format.
- Dictation activities are delivered at a slower pace, with repetition of each sentence or number sentence to support transcription and comprehension.
- Key visual cues remain accessible on tables and walls throughout the day to support recall and independence.

This approach ensures that handwriting instruction in the ARP is inclusive, developmentally appropriate, and aligned with each pupil’s individual learning journey. It supports both motor development and writing fluency, while also fostering self-esteem, routine, and enjoyment.

IMPACT

- Each pupil’s performance in Writing will be assessed by the teacher against the curriculum objectives.
- Pupil progress will be reported to parents through the end of year report and orally during the parent-consultation evenings where parents specifically ask.
- Children are given opportunities to self-assess their own achievement and progress throughout the year via interaction with their targets and moderation forms in their books.
- Pupils will enjoy writing and sharing their writing across a range of contexts.
- Pupils of all abilities will be able to succeed in all English lessons because sentences are carefully constructed collaboratively.
- Pupils will develop a wide vocabulary that they use within their writing.

- Pupils will have a good knowledge of how to adapt their writing based on the intended purpose and audience.
- Pupils will leave primary school being able to effectively apply spelling rules and patterns they have been taught.
- Pupils will leave primary school being able to write fluently and legibly at pace.
- The % of pupils working at are within each year group will be at least in line with national averages.
- The % of pupils working at greater depth within each year group will be at least in line with national averages.
- There will be minimised significant gaps in the progress of different groups of pupils (e.g. disadvantaged vs non-disadvantaged).

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors

- Ensuring a broad and balanced Writing curriculum is implemented in the school.
- Ensuring the school's Writing curriculum is accessible to all pupils.

Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher (Quality of Education)

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring the school's Writing curriculum is implemented consistently.
- Ensuring appropriate resources are allocated to the Writing curriculum.
- Ensuring all pupils are appropriately supported.
- Appointing a member of staff to lead on the school's approach to teaching Writing.

Subject Leader

- Preparing policy documents, curriculum plans and schemes of work for Writing.
- Reviewing changes to the national curriculum and advising on their implementation.
- Monitoring the learning and teaching of Writing, providing support for staff where necessary.
- Organising the sourcing of and deployment of resources and carrying out an annual audit of all Writing resources.
- Advising on the contribution of Writing to other curriculum areas.
- Keeping up to date with developments in Writing education, passing this on to other members of staff. This could include leading staff meetings and providing staff members with the appropriate training, working alongside colleagues etc...
- Monitoring and evaluating progress in Writing and liaising with senior leadership on any action necessary.
- Liaising with appropriate bodies e.g. other primary schools and secondary schools, governors, the LA etc. concerning matters relating to Writing.

Teacher

- Acting in accordance with this policy.
- Liaising with the Writing leads about key topics, resources and supporting individual pupils.
- Ensuring that all relevant statutory content is covered within the school year.
- Monitoring the progress of pupils in their class and reporting this on an annual basis to parents.
- Reporting any concerns regarding the teaching of the subject to the Writing lead or a member of the SLT.
- Undertaking any training that is necessary to teach the subject effectively.

MONITORING & REVIEW

This policy is monitored and reviewed by the Writing subject leader.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years.