Melbourne Primary School

Writing Policy

Date: October 2026 | Review date: July 2027

Leadership of Writing:

Writing Lead: Sam Parkinson

Early Years Lead: Abi Williams

SENDCo: Emma Darwin

Headteacher: Vicky Burdett

Core Subject Governor: Jane Henley

How is Writing Taught at Melbourne Primary School?

Vision

At our school, writing is taught as a connected, progressive journey from EYFS into KS1 and KS2. Our intent is to develop confident, motivated and capable writers who understand writing as a craft and see themselves as authors with a voice. We provide a rich, language-driven curriculum that builds children's ideas, vocabulary, fluency and technical skills so they can write for pleasure, purpose and audience.

Our approach draws on the DfE's Writing Framework (2025), alongside the National Curriculum and the EYFS Statutory Framework. In line with the Writing Framework, we teach both transcription (handwriting and spelling) and composition, with a strong focus on mastering sentences through oral rehearsal. Expectations for handwriting are set out in full in our Handwriting Policy.

We aim for all children, including those with SEND, to:

- Build strong foundations in talk, drawing, storytelling, reading and writing.
- Use high-quality texts as models for structure, ideas and authorial techniques.
- Develop secure transcription skills through phonics, spelling and handwriting progression.
- Apply writing across the curriculum for meaningful purposes.
- Experience a positive writing culture where their voice is valued and celebrated.

Our writing curriculum is designed so that EYFS foundations lead seamlessly into KS1, where children secure transcription and build early writing independence, and then into KS2, where they refine their writing with control, craft and purpose, ensuring clear progression and high expectations for every learner.

Implementation

EYFS: Foundations of Writing

In EYFS, writing is taught with an interconnected approach, consisting of multiple layers, that nurtures children's imagination, oral language, physical development and phonics. Our provision combines Drawing Club, Poetry Basket, Talk for Writing, Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, and carefully planned continuous provision. Together, these elements build strong foundations in composition, vocabulary, phonics, and handwriting.

Core EYFS Approaches

Drawing Club

- Writing begins with imaginative drawing, storytelling and mark making.
- Children express their ideas through pictures and oral retelling before adding labels, key words or simple sentences.
- This fosters narrative thinking, creativity, fine motor skills and confidence.

Poetry Basket

- Children learn a core set of poems and rhymes by heart using actions, voice and performance.
- This develops expressive language, vocabulary, memory, rhythm and phonological awareness—key building blocks for early writing.

Oral and Visual Story Mapping

- Using Talk for Writing principles, children imitate and retell stories orally using actions and story maps.
- Oral rehearsal helps children secure sentence structure, sequencing and vocabulary before writing.
- As children become more confident, they begin adapting stories and writing simple captions or sentences linked to their story maps.

Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised (Phonics and Early Transcription)

Little Wandle provides systematic phonics teaching and supports early spelling and handwriting.

By the end of EYFS, children working at expected level will:

- Form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly written.
- Spell words by segmenting sounds and matching them to letters.
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

Little Wandle supports this by:

- Explicitly teaching and modelling correct letter formation.
- Teaching children to segment and blend sounds to spell words accurately.
- Encouraging children to apply their phonics in meaningful writing tasks across the environment.
- Supporting the development of legible handwriting and secure grapheme–phoneme correspondences.

Guided Handwriting Lessons

- We teach short, focused handwriting sessions that model correct posture, pencil grip and letter formation, using our P Checks (posture, pencil, paper and pressure).
- We use the Little Wandle handwriting books so that handwriting is taught with fidelity to the programme. Children learn letters in formation families using the Little Wandle formation rhymes.
- These sessions follow Little Wandle and our school Handwriting Policy.
- This builds accuracy, consistency and confidence as children begin to write more independently.
- These sessions sit alongside phonics teaching so children can apply new graphemes in writing straight away.

Continuous Provision that Supports Early Writing Development

High-quality provision underpins writing in EYFS. Our environment is intentionally designed to strengthen fine motor skills, language, imagination and opportunities for purposeful writing. Gross motor skills are developed through our outdoor provision and handwriting lessons.

Busy Fingers (Fine Motor Development)

- Daily Busy Fingers activities develop grip strength, hand control, dexterity and coordination.
- This prepares children for comfortable, efficient pencil control and fluent handwriting.

Writing Provision Area

- A writing area is available every day with a range of tools, papers and prompts linked to our current reading theme.
- Children are encouraged to write for real purposes—messages, labels, story ideas, speech bubbles, lists, maps—making writing meaningful and motivating.

Storytelling & Story Mapping

- Provision includes materials for children to create their own story maps, retell texts and practise oral language.
- This supports sequencing, vocabulary, creativity and early composition skills.

EYFS Impact

Children leave EYFS ready for KS1 with:

- Secure phonics foundations and recognisable letter formation.
- Confidence in oral storytelling and expressing ideas.
- Early understanding of how writing communicates meaning.
- Motivation to write and a belief that they *are* writers.
- A wide and expressive vocabulary that supports confident ideas, talk and early writing.

KS1: Securing Transcription and Building Early Writing Independence

In KS1, the focus is on securing transcription, developing accurate sentence construction and building children's confidence as independent writers. Teaching in Year 1 and Year 2 reflects children's developmental stages and builds progressively from phonics-based writing to more independent composition.

Year 1: Mastering Sentences and Secure Transcription

In Year 1, writing builds directly on EYFS foundations with a strong focus on sentence construction, phonics application and writing stamina.

- Sentence construction is taught explicitly through oral rehearsal, modelling and sentence dictation.
- Children write sentences using fully decodable words, ensuring that transcription demands do not limit composition.
- Sentence dictation is used regularly to support accuracy, fluency and confidence in writing complete sentences.
- Children are exposed to rich vocabulary through high-quality texts, talk and discussion, even when vocabulary is not yet decodable.
- Any words children are expected to write independently in dictation are fully decodable and aligned with their phonics knowledge.
- Talk for Writing continues to support oral storytelling, story mapping and shared writing.
- Opening Doors texts introduce children to rich language and authorial techniques through listening, discussion and imitation, without placing inappropriate transcription demands on pupils.
- Guided handwriting supports accuracy, letter formation and writing stamina.
- Frequent, purposeful writing opportunities are provided across the curriculum.

Year 2: Fluent Transcription and Developing Composition

In Year 2, children build on their Year 1 foundations to develop greater fluency, independence and control in writing.

- Talk for Writing continues to support planning, structure and genre understanding through imitation, innovation and independent writing.
- Children continue to encounter rich language and vocabulary through class texts, shared reading and discussion.
- Spelling is taught using Little Wandle, following a sound-to-print approach, supporting children to understand spelling patterns and apply them accurately in their writing.
- Sentence dictation and structured sentence work remain in place to support accuracy and fluency where needed.
- Scaffolded phonics and spelling support is provided for pupils who require phonics catch-up, ensuring no child is disadvantaged.
- Writing tasks gradually increase in length and complexity, with children composing short narratives and non-fiction texts with greater independence.
- Opening Doors (Bob Cox) approaches and strategies broaden children's reading, teach grammar in context and explore authorial intent, giving children a wide range of high-quality models to draw on in their own writing.

- Handwriting is taught at least three times a week. Letters reduce in size, and children begin to use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed for joining, starting with joining two letters, including the digraphs they have been taught, in line with our Handwriting Policy.
- Purposeful writing across the curriculum continues to reinforce writing as a meaningful tool for communication.

KS1 End-of-Phase Impact

By the end of KS1, children:

- Demonstrate secure, fluent transcription skills.
- Write clear, coherent sentences and short texts with confidence.
- Apply phonics and spelling knowledge accurately in their writing.
- Use language and sentence patterns drawn from high-quality models.
- Understand themselves as authors, capable of making choices about language, structure and meaning.

KS2: Composition with Control, Craft and Purpose

In KS2, pupils deepen their understanding of writing craft, develop authorial voice and learn to write with impact, accuracy and control.

Core KS2 Approaches

- Opening Doors (Bob Cox): approaches and strategies from Opening Doors broaden pupils' reading through rich, challenging literature, teach grammar in context and explore authorial intent, including imagery, tone, viewpoint and structure. Pupils read as writers and draw on a wide range of models to inspire their own writing, rather than relying on a single text.

- Talk for Writing (KS2): supports planning, organisation and genre knowledge through toolkits, boxing-up and guided writing.

- Language-rich teaching, discussion and modelling: vocabulary grows naturally through class novels, shared writing and discussion. Pupils learn to choose precise, meaningful words to shape meaning.

- Writing as craft: pupils plan, draft, revise and edit with increasing independence, understanding how writers refine their work.

- Grammar progression: taught in context, ensuring pupils apply technical knowledge purposefully.

- Spelling: taught through Sounds-Write three times a week, including dictation and the statutory word lists, building pupils' understanding of phoneme–grapheme correspondences, spelling patterns and morphology (see How Spelling is Taught).

- Handwriting: joined handwriting is taught formally from Year 3, starting with the three basic joins. In Years 3 and 4 (two to three sessions a week), pupils develop consistent, legible joins and slant. In Years 5 and 6 (at least two sessions a week), pupils build speed while keeping their writing legible, and develop a personal style once fluency is secure. Expectations are set out in our Handwriting Policy.

- Writing for a wide range of audiences and forms: narratives, poetry, explanation, persuasion, discussion, formal writing and cross-curricular writing.

KS2 End-of-Phase Impact

Children leave KS2 as:

- Confident, independent writers capable of adapting style, tone and structure.
- Analytical readers who can identify and imitate authorial techniques.
- Skilled practitioners of the writing process: planning, drafting, revising and editing.
- Authors who understand the power and purpose of written communication.

SEND and Inclusion in Writing

We are committed to ensuring that all children, including those with SEND, access a rich, high-quality writing curriculum and view themselves as successful, capable authors. Writing is taught through an inclusive model at every stage, with barriers removed proactively and support tailored to individual need. Teachers ensure adaptations do not narrow the curriculum or reduce pupils' exposure to high-quality models.

Identification and Early Support

- Pupils who need additional support with language, phonics, spelling, motor skills or written expression are identified quickly through ongoing assessment and teacher observation.
- Staff work closely with the SENDCo (Emma Darwin) to ensure timely and targeted support.

Interventions and Targeted Teaching

- Phonics and spelling interventions support children who need further consolidation with segmenting, blending, grapheme–phoneme correspondences or spelling patterns.
- Writing interventions focus on sentence construction, idea generation, vocabulary development, organisation or motor skills depending on the child's need.
- Interventions are carefully monitored to ensure they have impact, with adjustments made where necessary.

Adaptive Teaching in Class

Teachers adapt tasks, scaffolds and resources to ensure all children can participate fully in writing lessons. This may include:

- Sentence starters, writing frames or vocabulary support.
- Oral rehearsal, scribing or shared writing.
- Chunked tasks, additional modelling or exemplars.
- Opportunities for pre-teaching ideas and vocabulary.

Use of Assistive Technology

To ensure equal access to writing, pupils may use technology such as:

- Touch typing tools for pupils who fatigue quickly or find handwriting a barrier.
- Speech-to-text or dictation software to allow children to express ideas without transcription limitations.
- Word-processing tools to support editing and organisation.

These strategies enable children to engage in the full writing process and communicate their ideas with independence.

Maintaining High Ambition for All

- We ensure that pupils with SEND access the *same high-quality texts, experiences and teaching approaches* as their peers.
- Writing outcomes are personalised, but ambition remains high for every child.
- All children are supported to develop their voice as writers and to recognise themselves as authors.

Parent Partnership

We work closely with parents to ensure they understand the support their child is receiving and how they can help at home. Regular communication ensures that writing support is consistent and reinforced across home and school.

Assessment of Writing

Assessment is integral to our writing curriculum and ensures that teaching is responsive, targeted and ambitious for all pupils.

EYFS Assessment

Assessment in EYFS is rooted in observational practice, continuous provision and child-led writing experiences. In line with early years research and good practice:

- Teachers assess writing through observations, mark making, drawing, emergent writing, oral storytelling, and early attempts at transcription.

- Adults capture evidence from play, small-group work, fine motor sessions and independent writing opportunities.

- Assessment is formative and holistic, building a picture of how children communicate their ideas using drawing, talk and early phonics.

- Progress is monitored using the EYFS Framework, focusing on children's:
    - Communication and language
    - Early phonics knowledge
    - Fine motor development
    - Mark-making fluency
    - Ability to write recognisable letters, segment words and write simple phrases

- Teachers use this evidence to plan next steps, identify support needs quickly and prepare children for transition into KS1.

Handwriting Tracking (EYFS to Year 1)

- We track handwriting from EYFS to Year 1 to identify transcription gaps early.
- Tracking focuses on accurate letter formation, including where each letter starts, the direction of movement and how it finishes, in line with Little Wandle and our school handwriting policy.
- Pupils who are not yet forming letters accurately are supported through additional guided handwriting and fine motor practice, so that handwriting does not become a barrier to composition.

KS1 and KS2 Assessment

- Writing is assessed through independent final pieces, produced at the end of a teaching sequence.

- Teachers make professional judgments based on the Writing Curriculum Progression and National Curriculum expectations.

- Writing evidence includes:
    - Independent extended writing
    - Writing across the curriculum
    - Drafting, editing and publishing
    - Contributions during shared/guided writing

- Assessment informs planning, support, groupings and interventions.

Moderation

To ensure consistency and accuracy:

- The Writing Lead (Sam Parkinson) leads internal moderation each term.
- Cross-school moderation opportunities are accessed regularly.
- Exemplars and comparative judgement are used to support professional consistency.

Writing Across the Curriculum

Writing opportunities are embedded throughout the wider curriculum so that writing is purposeful, meaningful and integrated with children's learning.

Across all subjects, children write in forms such as:

- Reports, explanations and recounts (Science, Geography, History)
- Reflections and comparisons (RE)
- Instructions and evaluations (DT)
- Responses to art, music and PE
- Notes, diagrams and explanations in computing and PSHE

We ensure writing tasks are connected to class texts, current learning and real audiences, helping to reduce barriers, deepen understanding and strengthen engagement.

Writing Culture and Enrichment

We foster a whole-school culture where writing is valued, celebrated and enjoyed.

Our writing culture includes:

- Sharing writing across classes and with the wider community.
- Publishing writing around school, showcasing children's progress and achievement.
- Writer of the Week award celebrated in assembly.
- Writing competitions each year to inspire creativity.
- Opportunities for children to perform, read aloud and share pieces they are proud of.
- Regular use of high-quality children's literature and author voices to inspire writing.

This culture ensures that children see themselves not just as learners of writing, but as writers and authors with something worth saying.

Impact

Across the school, the impact of our writing curriculum is seen in pupils who write with confidence, enjoyment and ownership, and who understand themselves as authors. Through our progressive approach from EYFS to KS2, pupils develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to write effectively for a wide range of purposes and audiences.

Our curriculum ensures that pupils:

- Apply secure phonics, spelling, grammar and transcription skills to write with accuracy and fluency.
- Use vocabulary, structures and techniques drawn naturally from the high-quality texts they encounter.
- Understand how writing develops from generating ideas, through drafting and revising, to producing a final piece.
- Produce writing that is increasingly coherent, purposeful and creative as they move through the school.
- Write across the curriculum with confidence, deepening their understanding of other subjects.
- Reflect on themselves as writers, taking pride in their achievements and engaging positively with feedback.
- Contribute to a strong writing culture, sharing their work with peers, classes, the wider school community and beyond.

The impact of our provision is monitored through independent writing, ongoing formative assessment, spelling and phonics outcomes, and regular moderation across phases. This ensures that pupils make strong progress from their starting points and leave each phase of learning prepared for the next stage of their writing journey.

Monitoring, Review and CPD

The Writing Lead, supported by the Headteacher and Core Subject Governor, monitors writing through learning walks, book looks, pupil voice, planning scrutiny and data analysis. Findings inform school improvement priorities and staff CPD.

Teachers receive regular CPD to ensure strong subject knowledge in writing pedagogy, grammar, spelling and text-based instruction.

Appendix

How a Writing Unit is Taught

Writing units from Year 1 to Year 6 follow the Talk for Writing sequence, enriched with Opening Doors approaches:

- **Imitation**: children internalise a high-quality model text through a hook, text maps, actions and repeated oral rehearsal, so that its language and sentence patterns become their own. Opening Doors extracts and taster drafts widen the models children draw on beyond a single text.
- **Innovation**: through carefully planned shared writing, teachers model the whole writing process, from boxing up and planning to drafting, rereading aloud, revising and editing. Sentence games, word collection and a working wall support children as they innovate on the model text themselves. Drafting is a working process in which ideas can change, but accurate spelling, punctuation and handwriting are expected throughout and are refined further through editing.
- **Independent application**: children apply what they have learnt to an independent piece, using the same planning tools and oral rehearsal, often in a cross-curricular context where they have strong subject knowledge to draw on.

This sequence reflects the Writing Framework's emphasis on oral composition, mastering sentences and explicitly teaching the writing process.

How Spelling is Taught

Spelling is taught systematically from EYFS to Year 6, with one consistent sound-to-print approach so that pupils build on what they already know:

- **EYFS and KS1**: spelling is taught through Little Wandle. Children learn tricky words in Reception and common exception words in Years 1 and 2 alongside their phonics.
- **Years 3–6**: spelling is taught through Sounds-Write in three lessons a week. Its sound-to-print approach builds on Little Wandle, so pupils use the same understanding of how sounds are written as they move through school. The Year 3/4 and Year 5/6 statutory word lists are taught within these lessons.
- **Dictation**: every spelling lesson includes dictation, so pupils apply spellings accurately in sentences rather than in isolation.
- **Morphology and etymology**: pupils learn how words are built and where they come from, in spelling lessons and in vocabulary teaching across the curriculum.
- **Spelling across the curriculum**: pupils use syllable lines in all subjects, matching the strategies taught in spelling lessons, so they approach unfamiliar words the same way wherever they write.
- **Assessment**: spelling is assessed continuously through spelling lessons, dictation and pupils' independent writing.