

The Mount Charles Approach to Early Writing

As a response to the OFSTED English Subject Report, the Reading Framework and the Bold Beginnings report, we have ensured that our curriculum addresses difficulties seen nationally in Early Writing in the following ways.

Vocabulary

In Nursery Vocabulary is built through:

- SALT provision being a focus area which is woven through all the curriculum design, due to the context of the school.
- Daily 'Busy groups' (adult-led activities which focus on talk-based opportunities).
- The Scribble Club which brings writing to the children's continuous provision and play.
- Daily story-time with carefully mapped texts and vocabulary.
- Mapped vocabulary for each area of learning each half term.
- Daily 'What's in the box?' opportunities to explore the environment.
- Talk through stories (Summer)
- The EEF's SHREC approach is used throughout the EYFS phase to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills and to raise the standard of adult-child interactions.
- Opportunities for MTYT (my turn your turn) are incorporated into all aspects of the curriculum to help embed vocabulary.

In Reception Vocabulary is built through:

- SALT provision being a focus area which is woven through all the curriculum design, due to the context of the school,
- Daily focus groups (adult-led activities which focus on talk-based opportunities).
- The Drawing Club beings which focuses on high-quality vocabulary and oral rehearsal of ideas.
- Daily story-time with carefully mapped texts and vocabulary.
- Mapped vocabulary for each area of learning each half term.
- Daily introductions to the day's 'Invitation to Learn' enable practitioners to identify pupils' next steps in learning (as part of Plan-Do-Review). This includes pupils orally planning where they are going to learn through play.
- Talk through stories (all year)
- The EEF's SHREC approach is used throughout the EYFS phase to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills and to raise the standard of adult-child interactions.
- RWI phonic sessions and the introduction of red and green words. Fluency sessions within RWI focus explicitly on vocab.

In Year 1 Vocabulary is built through:

- SALT provision being a focus area which is woven through all the curriculum design, due to the context of the school.
- Daily guided writing groups focus on teachers supporting vocabulary development around a stimulus.
- Daily story-time with carefully mapped texts and vocabulary.
- Subject leaders having carefully mapped vocabulary for each area of learning each half term into learning overviews. This includes Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary. Widgeo is used to reinforce this and to support learnings with additional needs or disadvantage.
- Talk through stories (all year)
- RWI phonic sessions and the introduction of red and green words. Fluency sessions within RWI focus explicitly on vocab. 1:1 tutoring supports children to keep up not catch up.

Oral rehearsal of composition

In Nursery oral rehearsal of composition opportunities are provided through:

- Use of MTYT (my turn, your turn) which provides opportunities for children to orally rehearse new vocabulary.
- Mapped oracy opportunities in all subjects.
- Nursery rhymes throughout the day.
- Daily opportunities for book talk.
- Daily planned oracy opportunities in busy groups such as 'Welly Wednesday'.
- Adults modelling high expectations of words and phrases.
- 'Plan, do, review' cycles where children are encouraged to verbalise their continuous provision choices.

In Reception oral rehearsal of composition opportunities are provided through:

- Planned opportunities for MTYT (my turn your turn) in all areas of the curriculum to help embed vocabulary.
- Children being encouraged to answer in full sentences following the MCS STAR model.
- Daily 'Talk through stories' lessons.
- Mapped oracy opportunities in all subjects.
- Voice 21 Oracy strategies embedded across the curriculum.
- Adults modelling high expectations of words and phrases.
- 'Plan, do, review' cycle where children are encouraged to verbalise their continuous provision choices.

In Year 1 oral rehearsal of composition opportunities are provided through:

- Planned opportunities for MTYT (my turn your turn) in all areas of the curriculum to help embed vocabulary.
- Children being encouraged to answer in full sentences following the MCS STAR model.
- Mapped oracy opportunities in all subjects.
- Adults modelling high expectations of words and phrases.
- Daily 'Talk through stories' lessons.

Daily transcription

- Transcription is taught from day one of Nursery (and Reception for those joining at this stage and follows the following approach.

Stage One (Nursery & Reception)	Stage Two	Stage Three (Reception Autumn)	Stage Four (Reception Spring)	Stage Five (Reception Summer & Year 1 Autumn)	Stage Six (Y1 Spring)	Stage Seven (Y1 Summer)	Stage Eight (Year 2 Spring)
<p>Before mark-making begins 'transcription skills' begin with the development of fine and gross motor movements. Opportunities for these are intentionally planned through adult-led and continuous provision activities. This will include regular write-dance provision as part of daily fine and gross motor opportunities. Carefully planned fine-motor activities are always provided within the continuous provision opportunities as a focussed area.</p>	<p>From the start of explicit writing teaching, the 'Ready to Write' and 'Nip, Flip, Grip' approaches are taught to ensure pupil develop healthy writing postures and develop a secure tripod pencil grip. Letter formation begins with name writing as and when children are developmentally ready in the nursery and from day one of reception for most pupils. This then progresses through the RWI phonics programme with the explicit teaching of individual letters and progressing on to digraphs and trigraphs when ready. Alongside this number formation is explicitly taught and reinforced through continuous provision and adult-led sessions. Fine and gross activities continue to be explicitly planned for continuous provision. Intervention is provided for those who are not developmentally ready to access this provision at this time.</p>	<p>Once children have built up sufficient GPC knowledge and can form letters legibly, they begin to write labels, captions and lists and to take part in word-level dictation activities. Capitals will be introduced as and when relevant for names initially.</p>	<p>Once children have built up sufficient confidence and legibility in writing individual CVC words and short phrases, they begin to write sentences which align with their phonetic ability. These may include 'red' common exception words and will introduce the use of capitals and full stops to start and end sentences. Dictation sentences will be used to begin building writing stamina and fluency, whilst removing the cognitive load of creating sentence ideas.</p>	<p>Once children are able to write short sentences with phonetically plausible attempts, the complexity and length of sentences as well as their phonetic spellings will be increased. Dictation sentences will reflect this increase in phonetic knowledge, spelling ability and improvement in transcription fluency.</p>	<p>Once pupils are confident in translating their phonetic skills and vocabulary knowledge into sentences, they will begin to create and rehearse their own sentences to write using accurate letter formation and increasing fluency.</p>	<p>Pupils are no longer considered early writers. They can form all their letters and numbers accurately and create ideas for writing which they can then spell (with some phonetically plausible attempts at more complex words) themselves. At this stage, the amount of independent writing increases and lead -ins are taught for pre-cursive transcription.</p>	<p>Pupils are writing independently and begin to be taught how to join their handwriting.</p>

- Transcription matches stage not age. The stages above can be fluidly moved between for pupils who require additional support.
- Pencil grip is explicitly taught and reinforced throughout the school using Nip, Flip, Grip.
- Posture is taught using 'Ready to Write' to establish expected posture etc.

Dictation opportunities.

In Nursery dictation opportunities are provided through:

- Planned and 'in the moment' mark-making opportunities in response to role play, continuous provision, conversations and pupils' interests.

In Reception dictation opportunities are provided through:

- Daily 'Super Sentence' dictations which are sequenced progressively from single words to phrases and eventually simple sentences. These are aligned with the GPCs and Red words previously taught.
- Children using talk tins to share thoughts provoked by the curiosity cube. The children then have opportunities to listen to their speech and write it down.
- Hold a sentence being used as part of the RWI cycle, this is modelled and guided by a teacher.

In Year 1 dictation opportunities are provided through:

- Daily dictation sentences during writing lessons.
- Hold a sentence as part of the RWI cycle. This is modelled and guided by a teacher.
- Dictation sentences within the wider curriculum for some groups of pupils where relevant and required.

Writing resources & environment.

In Nursery this is how the environment and resources enable writing:

- A Funky fingers table is always carefully planned for and provided within the environment to support fine motor skills development. This will aid the children in writing and mark-making.
- A planned Funky Fingers busy group is adult led once a week. This is carefully planned to support the children's interests and individual needs.
- Adult-led 'Write Dance' opportunities develop the children's early writing and mark-making skills.
- Outdoor writing opportunities for mark-making are planned and provided within the provision.
- Indoor writing opportunities for mark-making are planned and provided within the provision such as in the role-play area. This provides purposeful and discrete writing opportunities which are meaningful.
- Pupils are provided with writing materials which support their writing development. For example, exercise book lines match the appropriate size and stage of writing development; lined whiteboards are provided to scaffold development of appropriate letter formation in all writing scenarios and thicker pencils and/or pencil grips or wobble cushions are used to support pupils whose writing requires further development. Tables and chairs are matched to the height of the children to support a strong writing posture.

In Reception this is how the environment and resources enable writing:

- A Funky fingers table is always carefully planned for and provided within the environment to support fine motor skills development. This will aid the children in writing and mark-making.
- Whole class dough disco sessions develop hand strength and fine motor skills.
- Writing opportunities within the environment are provided linked to all areas of learning. This provides opportunities for purposeful writing which also extended wider learning.
- The environment provides rich RWI resources such as sound mats and speed sound charts as well as red words, which consolidate and allow pupils to apply their phonetic learning in their writing across the curriculum and the school day.
- A focussed writing table which extends learning from 'Drawing Club' sessions I always present within the environment and planning ensures this is used by pupils as required.
- Outdoor writing opportunities for mark-making are planned and provided within the provision.
- Indoor writing opportunities for mark-making are planned and provided within the provision such as in the role-play area. This provides purposeful and discrete writing opportunities which are meaningful.
- Pupils are provided with writing materials which support their writing development. For example, exercise book lines match the appropriate size and stage of writing development; lined whiteboards are provided to scaffold development of appropriate letter formation in all writing scenarios and thicker pencils and/or pencil grips or wobble cushions are used to support pupils whose writing requires further development. Tables and chairs are matched to the height of the children to support a strong writing posture.
- Pupils are taught, from day 1, how to hold a pencil using the school's 'Nip, Flip and Grip' approach and how to sit to develop a strong writing posture using the school's 'Ready to Write' approach.

In Year 1 this is how the environment and resources enable writing:

- Busy learning writing stations are set up in the classroom that provide writing opportunities linked to our current topics.
- In all subjects, there are planned opportunities for pupils to record their ideas in their books following oral rehearsal.
- A range of writing opportunities with different writing materials are provided across the curriculum.
- All writing is done at the table.
- Pupils are provided with writing materials which support their writing development. For example, exercise book lines match the appropriate size and stage of writing development; lined whiteboards are provided to scaffold development of appropriate letter formation in all writing scenarios and thicker pencils and/or pencil grips or wobble cushions are used to support pupils whose writing requires further development. Tables and chairs are matched to the height of the children to support a strong writing posture.
- Pupils are taught, from day 1, how to hold a pencil using the school's 'Nip, Flip and Grip' approach and how to sit to develop a strong writing posture using the school's 'Ready to Write' approach.