



Writing at Bridge

Bridge Junior School Statement of Intent for Writing

At Bridge Junior, we know that learning to write for a range of purposes and audiences is fundamental to children, not only in school but as a life skill as well. We enable to develop their writing skills so that they have a toolkit from which they can confidently draw and apply to a range of different types of writing across the curriculum. We want children to enjoy the process of writing, which happens through writing that is meaningful; having a motivational hook; and allowing children to learn the right skills with the right support and the ability to apply these skills independently.

At Bridge, we build upon the writing journey that the children at our feeder infant school. We develop children's handwriting, spelling, understanding and use of standard English, sentence construction, vocabulary and punctuation, so that they can write coherently for a range of different audiences and purposes. By the end of Year 6, children are fully equipped to tackle the writing requirements of the Key Stage 2 SATs and have developed the fluency with which to meet the needs of Year 7 cross-curricular writing.

Through an interesting, progressive and relevant curriculum, our children are motivated to write, and become confident, fluent and independent writers. We want children's experience of writing at Bridge to be memorable, inclusive, meaningful, and to open up future opportunities for all.

Implementation

Writing at Bridge is taught within the framework of the National Curriculum. Our implementation is based on the following core principles:

1) Progressive long-term and medium-term plans

The long-term plan for writing is mapped out so that children write for a range of age-appropriate purposes and audiences. To give writing a context, units of writing are based on either the class reader, a quality picture book, or the class topic. Children are exposed to a diverse range of different books, including classic texts, books by modern authors, books from different cultures and non-fiction texts. The long-term plan provides the children with opportunities to develop and build upon skills, both within a year group and across the key stage. Medium-term plans identify the grammar and vocabulary that is to be taught within a unit of writing to ensure that skills are built upon and are consistent across all classes.

2) Regular opportunities to write

Children will write at least 2-3 longer pieces of writing every half term. As part of the teaching sequence, they will also have the opportunity to write shorter 'bursts'. The shorter bursts vary in length, but in order to develop cohesion and cohesive devices, children are expected to write at least a paragraph from the start Y3 onwards. As well as writing in English, children have the opportunity to write for cross-curricular purposes, where they are able to demonstrate their writing skills in other subjects.

3) Reduced cognitive load

At every stage of the writing journey, staff reduce the cognitive load for children so that they can focus on developing their writing skills. Thus, children will not be expected to write about subject matter they are not familiar with. Children will either have been taught the subject matter prior to writing, or they will be able to use imaginary ideas.

Similarly, children who are not working at the age-related expectations are supported through a variety of means such as writing scaffolds and word banks, and, if appropriate, through writing a less-challenging text type.

4) Explicit teaching of vocabulary

Cognitive load is also reduced through the explicit teaching of vocabulary. This is particularly important in our context where the majority of children are EAL or N2E learners. Children are taught subject-specific (tier three) vocabulary, as well as tier two vocabulary. Children have the opportunity to practise and use new vocabulary and to select words that are *appropriate* for the purpose in order to maintain cohesion. Teachers deploy a number of strategies to embed new vocabulary, including: I say/you say; clap the syllables; act it out; learn the etymology and morphology; learn synonyms for the word and to use the word in context.

5) A well-planned teaching sequence

Children are guided towards a final piece of writing in carefully planned steps. Each writing unit is taught using the following teaching sequence, utilising the pedagogical 'I, we you' modelling approach:

- i. **Hook** - to engage children from the outset, teachers will use a 'hook' as a motivational tool. This may take the form of a class novel, a trip, props, a visitor or a current news story.
- ii. **Read as a reader** - children are exposed to good-quality examples of the text type which they first read 'as a reader' to ensure their understanding of vocabulary, purpose, audience and layout.
- iii. **Read as a writer** - with support, children then read 'as a writer'. This involves identifying the features that makes the piece of writing effective. This will include an analysis of the author's choice of vocabulary, the sentence types, the use of punctuation, and how cohesion is achieved.
- iv. **Learn the grammar and punctuation** - Having identified the ingredients of an effective text-type, children are taught the grammar and punctuation within the context of the writing. Teachers identify which elements require explicit teaching in order to best move children's writing on. Children have the opportunity to practise the grammar and punctuation in shorter bursts of writing.
- v. **Learn the vocabulary** - Teachers identify which vocabulary children need to be explicitly taught and provide opportunities for this to be embedded within context in shorter bursts prior to longer final pieces. Children are taught to layer vocabulary, so that individual words are used effectively in phrases.
- vi. **I/We/You model** - This is another important aspect of reducing the cognitive load. Following Rosenshine's principles of instruction, the teacher will model a part of the teaching sequence, 'thinking aloud' so that the thought process is made explicit. Children will then be invited to have a go in pairs while the teacher checks in on them to ensure their understanding. The teacher will bring the class back as a whole to discuss any misconceptions, before children are asked to write independently.
- vii. **Plan** - This is an important part of the writing process and is one that teachers model. Children plan using a variety of methods, including boxing up the text, spider diagrams, story mountains and other graphic devices.
- viii. **Oral rehearsal** - Children need to practise saying their sentences out loud before committing to paper. This enables them to check whether or not is 'sounds' right and to ensure correct sentence construction.
- ix. **Edit** - Children are taught to edit their work to ensure that it makes sense, is cohesive and includes relevant features. This is done throughout a piece of writing as well as at the end. Children are also taught to peer-review each other's writing.

- x. **Proof-read** - Children are taught to proof-read their work to ensure that it is accurate. This includes identifying words they think are spelt incorrectly and using tools such as their peers, word banks and dictionaries to check.
- xi. **Publish or Present** - It is important that children feel there is a purpose to their writing, and as such, publish one longer piece each half term, or present their writing to an audience, such as their own or other classes, or to parents.

6) Non-negotiables

In order for children to achieve age-related expectations at the end of Key Stage 2, they have to be secure in the 'technical' elements of writing. Thus, each year group has a set of non-negotiables which have been identified as necessary elements for children to master, in preparation for the following academic year. Non-negotiables are introduced at the beginning of the academic year and are changed to meet the needs of the children. This allows for any gap in learning to be identified and quickly actioned by the children as these targets are specific for them.

7) Shared Journey

At Bridge the journey of writing is shared with both the child and the adult. Children understand where their learning is going and how they are going to get there through using the teaching sequence for each unit.

Each class uses a working wall display, where they are able to see the build-up of learning and are able to use this as a resource towards their learning. This wall also displays, what the children are working towards, what the audience and purpose is, vocabulary, punctuation and grammar. There are also many opportunities for the children to build on their prior learning throughout their writing process.

8) Assessment for Learning and Feedback

Assessment and feedback is an ongoing cycle throughout the writing process which allows the children to consistently improve their writing. Teachers use many opportunities to assess the children learning, identifying any misconceptions and progress it further with a teaching sequence that allows for additional lessons to ensure that all elements are understandable and that additional resources are put in place to enable to children's learning to become deeper.

Forms of feedback to children may include:

- i. Direct verbal feedback with a child at the point of writing
- ii. Teacher modelling of how to improve a piece of writing
- iii. Peer feedback
- iv. Marking against success criteria

9) Spelling as a process

An inability to spell a word should not impede the fluency of writing. Children are taught to 'have a go' and consider what 'looks right', rather than stop mid-flow and seek a spelling. As part of editing, children should return to words they are unsure of and make any corrections. There is an expectation that words which are on display (such as word banks and the date), are spelt correctly.

Children are also given feedback on spellings and are asked to write the correct spelling three times. Spelling that children consistently spell incorrectly are added to their non-negotiable list in order to allow them to become more confident at spelling words correctly.

At Bridge, we follow a spelling programme called No Nonsense Spelling which covers the statutory requirements for each year group and is taught three times a week with one of these lessons being a spelling test.

At Bridge, children begin their journey into year 3 by being assessed on the Year 3/4 statutory word list. Where appropriate, children are assessed with Year 1 and 2 common exception words. This is then built upon in year 4, and then onto Year 5/6 statutory spelling lists as the children move through the school.

Children are also assessed on the RWI phonic scheme, where they then receive spellings based upon the appropriate level they are currently working in. Children that do not follow RWI are given weekly spellings and teachers ensure that spellings are then applied to the children writing.

10) Fluent handwriting

Handwriting forms part of our non-negotiables. Children are taught to produce correctly formed, sized and spaced letters before being taught a cursive handwriting style where each letter has a lead in and a lead out. The style taught is shown below:

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

The letter joins are taught following the online scheme: [Home - Teach Handwriting](#)

Children write with a black pen from Year 3 onwards and make improvements with a purple pen.

Impact

Children at Bridge become confident writers, enjoy sharing what they have written with staff and other pupils, and are increasingly able to write for sustained periods of time.

Moderation of writing is conducted in-house and within the Development Group, using the Leicester City writing exemplification materials to support judgements. Children take the Rising Stars GaPS test every term and gaps are identified and addressed to ensure that children don't fall behind. Children's writing is assessed three times a year to determine whether the child is meeting age-related expectations based on what has been taught up to that point. The data is inputted into our online tracking tool, *Insight*, and progress is tracked at subsequent Pupil Progress Meetings.