

Reading: The Wray Common Way

At Wray Common, we are passionate about developing the competence of each and every reader while nurturing a real love for reading, which will remain with them for their entire lives. Reading is a key life skill, not just as the foundation for academic success, but to also open up to children a love of exciting literature from around the world. Therefore, our aim is for our children to become independent, fluent and enthusiastic readers, who enjoy reading a variety of texts.



The love of reading starts within the Reception year where reading begins with sharing books as a class, with small groups and reading individually. Books without words have their place in developing reading for all levels as talk and storytelling are key skills to teach the children and is the perfect place to start the reading journey. However, it isn't long before our children acquire the phonetic knowledge to access words and very quickly, they move into the Little Wandle reading books.



We use the Little Wandle reading scheme to support the children's reading development. These books are levelled to match the children's phonics phase. We expect family at home to read these books daily with their child and record comments in the Home Learning Journals. Questions to aid comprehension can be found in the HLJ to support parents in developing the necessary skills when discussing the reading books at home.



In Year 1 and 2, the children continue their love of reading and are encouraged to expand their word recognition while developing their comprehension skills. The children in Year 1 continue to take part in daily Phonics lessons, learning the common sounds in the English language, how to sound-blend words for reading and develop skills in spelling. In Year 1, the children participate in guided reading sessions, while in Year 2, the children start their journey into daily Reading Workshop sessions where the teaching of reading is developed through whole class shared reading. All pupils will also read independently to an adult in class, within the school week.

In Year 3 and 4, the Reading Workshop lessons continue to immerse the children in a wider range of high-quality texts, which link to and enhance the learning in theme work where appropriate. Naturally, the understanding and application of new and dynamic vocabulary is a focus and feature of all reading lessons. The aim of all lessons is to develop the fluency of reading, deepening the children's comprehension to enhance their independence and discussion around the text, which makes the reading an enjoyable session.



In Year 5 and 6, the reading lessons are key to encouraging pupils to read widely, across all genres, to develop their knowledge, to establish an appreciation and love of reading and to develop their comprehension skills across the curriculum. It is our intention that all pupils will be able to read fluently and with confidence and are ready to continue positively with their secondary education.

Reading for pleasure

At Wray Common, we want children to develop an enjoyment of reading. We encourage children to read for pleasure and to develop the ability to read fluently and with understanding.

We have a dedicated reading corner in all classes so that children have access to books throughout the week, in addition to both a key stage 1 and 2 library, which is generously stocked with age appropriate and popular texts.

Writing: The Wray Common Way

At Wray Common, we aim for all children to become confident, skilled and creative users of language. Our curriculum includes: speaking and listening, reading, writing, spelling and handwriting. Our approach involves the children exploring a variety of text types e.g. stories, information writing and recounts of stories or events. They do this using a number of strategies, such as playing language games, identifying common features of a text type, role-play, and evaluating different examples of a genre. They also learn text extracts by heart, choosing their own actions or drawing story maps to help them remember the words. This enables children to become immersed in the language they need for a particular topic, giving them the confidence to then write their own version. At Wray Common, we endeavour to plan cross-curricular writing. As the writing is very often topic based, children can use the knowledge gained from the topic lessons to support their learning and deepen vocabulary, understanding and experiences through their creative writing. - for example, when children are learning about the Romans in History, they might also be involved in writing a portal story, travelling back to a Roman amphitheatre, creating a leaflet for Roman historical attraction or performing a dramatised scene in a Roman market place.



Speaking and Listening

At Wray Common, our aim is for children to learn to communicate their thoughts, ideas and opinions clearly and succinctly, as well as to listen to and reflect on the ideas of others. We encourage children to take turns in conversations and adapt their speech to a range of situations and audiences. From an early age, the children are encouraged to participate in a range of activities such as drama and role-play.



Writing

At Wray Common, we want our pupils to write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences. We want pupils to acquire a wide vocabulary, a solid understanding of grammar and be able to spell new words by effectively applying the spelling patterns and rules they learn throughout their time in primary school. We believe that all pupils should be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their writing, in part by developing a good, joined, handwriting style by the time they move to secondary school. We aim for our children to develop their ability to write in a wide range of genres, both fiction, non-fiction and poetry.

Writing is developed from an early age by mark making and activities to develop fine motor skills. In reception, children spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters and quickly move on to writing words, simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others. In KS1, children are taught to use finger spaces, full stops and capital letters and progress to using other forms of punctuation such as question and exclamation marks. They are taught about using engaging and meaningful vocabulary to make their writing interesting. By the end of KS1, pupils begin to evaluate and make some improvements to their writing. In KS2, pupils develop competence in the accuracy of grammar, punctuation and spelling and the structure of text composition. Children are taught the skills of planning and drafting an extended piece of writing, organising their work coherently and the processes of evaluation and editing. Pupils will apply their skills through a range of genres considering vocabulary and structures appropriate for the purpose and audience.





At Wray Common, we incorporate the principles of Talk for Writing into our unique curriculum, in order to support our children's literacy skills. Talk for Writing was originally created by Pie Corbett and supported by Julia Strong and is powerful because it is based on the philosophy of how children learn.

Talk for Writing enables children to imitate the key language they need for a particular topic orally before they try reading it and analysing it. Through fun activities to help them rehearse the tune of the language they need, followed by shared writing to show them how to construct their genre, children are helped to write in the same style. It works well right through from the Early Years up to year 6 and beyond. To be successful within their writing, children are encouraged to have ownership of their learning journey by developing an understanding of the genre of the unit, having a clear idea of the audience for whom they are writing and knowing the purpose of the written task to help them focus their minds.

The Method

Talk for Writing is powerful because it enables children to imitate the language they need for a particular topic orally before they begin reading and analysing it and then writing their own version. Pie Corbett gives a brief explanation below of the basic principles. It builds on three key stages:

Stage 1 - Imitation

Stage 2 - Innovation

Stage 3 - Independent Application

The Imitation Stage

A typical T4W unit begins with 'a hook' to establish a creative context and an engaging start. This is then followed with engaging activities warming up the tune of the text to help children internalise the pattern of the language required. This is followed by talking through and exploring an exemplar text in greater detail. In KS1 and lower KS2 this is done visually through the use of text mapping and physical movements to help the children recall the story or non-fiction piece. In this way, the children hear the text, say it for themselves and enjoy it before seeing it written down. Once they have internalised the language of the text, they are in a position to read the text and start to think about the ingredients that helps make it work. Understanding the structure of the text is easy if you use the "boxing up" technique (mainly year 2 upwards) and then help the children to analyse the features that have helped to make the text work. In this way, the class starts to co-construct a toolkit for this type of text so they can talk about the ingredients themselves - a key stage in internalising the toolkit in their heads.

The Innovation Stage

Once the children have internalised the text, they are then ready to start innovating on the pattern of the text. This could begin with more advanced activities to warm up the key words and phrases of the type of text focused on so the children can magpie ideas. Younger children and less confident writers create their own text maps and orally rehearse what they want to

say. The key activity in this stage is shared writing, helping the children to write their own by 'doing one together' first. This could begin, with using a boxed-up grid, to show how to plan the text and turn the plan into writing. In addition, this allows the children to see how they can innovate on the exemplar text and select words and phrases that really work. Modelling and demonstrating how to re-read their work aloud regularly through this stage, is important as it helps children to check to see if what they are writing, works. This process enables the children to write their own versions through developing their inner judge when they start to decide why one word or phrase is best. If, during this process, a teaching assistant (or able Key Stage 2 child) records words and phrases suggested on the flipchart, these can be put on the washing line alongside the shared writing so when the children come to write, they have models and words and phrases to support them. Throughout the shared writing, the children should be strengthening the toolkit so they start to understand the type of ingredients that may help. Once they have finished their own paragraph/s children should be encouraged to swap their writing with a response partner. Then with the aid of the visualiser, the whole class can also discuss some of the more successful work. Time is then provided to enable the children to give their own work a polish through editing and making changes in light of the class discussions and perhaps to begin the dialogue about what works through writing conference time.

The Independent Application Stage

The teacher now has the opportunity to assess the children's work and to adapt their planning in the light of what the children can actually do. This stage could begin with some activities focused on helping the children understand aspects with which they were having difficulty and should include time for the children to have a go at altering their work in light of what they have just learnt so they start making progress. This stage will continue to focus on the next steps needed to support progress so the children can become independent speakers and writers of their text type. Perhaps some more examples of the text are compared, followed by more shared writing on a related topic and then the children can have a go themselves on a related topic of their own choosing. At the end of the unit, the children's work is celebrated and published or displayed.

Handwriting: The Wray Common Way

At Wray Common we use the Morrells Handwriting scheme, created by Suzanne Smits, in order to support our children in their writing. The scheme is designed to teach correct letter patterns, shapes and directional movements before moving on to size and legibility, ensuring a lasting fluent handwriting style.

In reception and key stage 1, time is dedicated to embedding printed letter formation in handwriting families*, ensuring these are used with skill before introducing joined up letters (end of yr2) which leads to fluency and automaticity. In key stage 2, children move toward writing with join up letters and develop their handwriting style so that the writing is legible and neatly presented.

Handwriting is taught as a specific skill for 10 minutes a day, using the Morrell handwriting books in years 1- 4 to practise a particular set of letters, concentrating on developing accuracy,

fluency and speed. In addition, three 20 minutes structured handwriting lessons per week ensure the consolidation of learning and that correct letter formation is embedded. Each handwriting lesson includes a warm-up activity, modelling of the letter formation and time for children to develop the skills independently. Teachers model correct handwriting in all lessons and children are encouraged to demonstrate high standards of handwriting across the curriculum. Non-continuous cursive is modelled in key stage 2.

*Letters are initially taught in formation families:

First Letters

Write over the letters below. Start at the large dot and follow the arrow and direction of the lines.

Cc Oo

Second Letters

Write over the letters below. Start at the large dot and follow the arrow and direction of the lines.

Ii

Third Letters

Write over the letters below. Start at the large dot and follow the arrow and direction of the lines.

Vv

Fourth Letters

Write over the letters below. Start at the large dot and follow the arrow and direction of the lines.

Rr

Fifth Letters

Write over the letters below. Start at the large dot and follow the arrow and direction of the lines.

Bb

Aa Gg Ll Tt WwUu NnMm Ee Ss

Qq Dd Kk Jj Yy Ff Hh Pp Xx Zz

Non-continuous cursive starts in Year 2 and continues in KS2:

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Cursive Top Tips:

- When joining up, letters do not have a lead in strokes it is the lead out that joins to the next letter.

- When joining please note that the 's' does not have a lead in or out stroke.

e.g. *some house*

- When writing the 'tail letters with curly tails' they do not join either.

e.g. *big just people my*

Warm-up Activities:

For younger children, practical tasks such as threading beads, squeezing clothes pegs, using peg boards, playdough and making shapes in sand and paint help to coordinate movements between the elbow, wrists, hand and fingers. Older writers can practise activities using clothes pegs or tweezers to pick up small objects to help strengthen the pincer grip.

Finger exercises as shown in the pictures are useful too.



Draw around the infinity sign to help strengthen the movement in the wrist.



Sitting Position:

Ensure the writer sits with both feet flat on the floor*, knees at 90° and with their bottom touching the back of the chair, leaning slightly forward. The chair should be pulled into the desk and both hands should be on the desk with the elbow bent at 90°

*using a plastic tray if the children are too short to touch the floor.



Correct Pencil Grip:

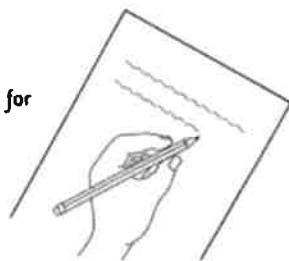
The dynamic tripod grip is considered to be the most effective way to hold a pencil or pen. The writer should hold the pencil or pen at an angle of 60° with the fingers 2-3 cm from the tip. The thumb and index finger should form a circle to control the pencil. The pencil should rest on the middle finger. The ring and little finger should be tucked into the palm of the hand.



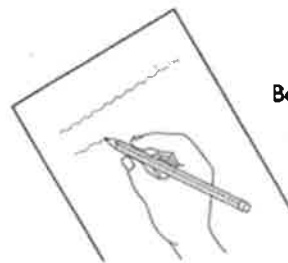
Paper position:

Paper should be positioned at a slight angle as shown in illustrations.

Book Position for
Left-Handed



Book Position for
Right-Handed



Printed Font:

All printed activity sheets should use Sassoon Primary Infant font as it is an easy reading font and models the correct handwriting style for Reception and KS1. All the letters have exit strokes that terminate on the baseline, which helps to build a space between the letters and promote the flowing movement that develops easily into joins.

All activity sheets where children are expected to write, need to have lines for children to write on.

Left-handed Writers:

Left-handed writers often develop a poor grip and an awkward style with a hooked hand over the top of the writing. A left-hander should hold the thumb high enough up from the pencil or pen point to allow them to see their writing. They should write with the hand below the writing line and the wrist straight because they need to push the pencil rather than pull like a right-hander. Left-handers should be seated on the left of righthanded writers to avoid elbows bumping when writing. Also check the light comes from their right hand side so that they are not writing in their own shadow.