

At Atwood, writing for purpose and pleasure is at the centre of our vision for writing for our children. Teachers seek exciting, engaging and enriching experiences for children in the texts and topics they choose to study which provided pupils with a rich context from which to draw upon. Pupils are exposed to and immersed in a wide range of genres with a focus on purpose and audience. Our approach to teaching is based on the recommendations of the Education Endowment Fund aimed at improving literacy teaching and the outcomes of pupils. It focuses on teaching writing composition strategies through modelling and supporting strategies and developing pupils’ fluent written transcription skills through purposeful and explicit practices.

Early Years

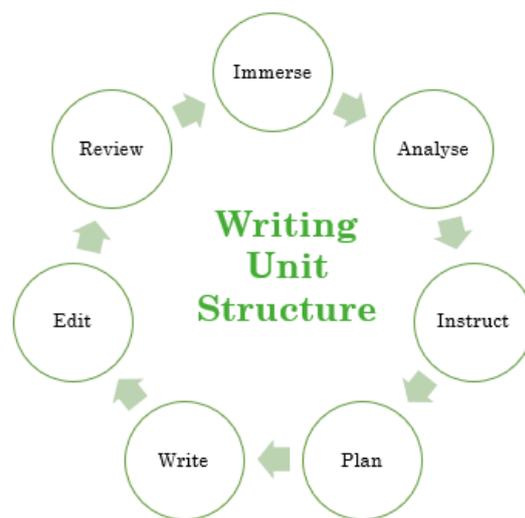
Throughout Early Years, children are immersed in a world of stories with a strong focus on developing vocabulary and oral literacy. Pupils start mark making from an early age developing the gross and fine motor skills needed for pen control through fine motor workshops. In Reception, pupils learn letter formation alongside letter sounds through the Read, Write Inc programme and start forming words and short sentences. Children have daily opportunities to write either through whole class activities, small group work or independently at a writing station. Children are given a clear purpose for writing with a focus on writing cards, letter, messages, lists and recipes.

Key Stages One and Two

In key stages one and two, purpose and audience remain central to effective writing. Teachers look for opportunities in texts they are reading and topics children are enjoying to provide highly engaging contexts and provide a real purpose and audience for children’s work. Children grow to understand that writing is an iterative process and are provided with a range of writing activities that support the organisation and development of their ideas as well as an understanding of how to improve their work.

This iterative process is embedded through a planning cycle used across the school:

	Why
Immerse	To inspire & engage pupils to ensure a clear understanding of the purpose & audience
Analyse	To understand the unique features of a text & how they contribute to its purpose
Instruct	To build upon prior learning & master new learning of specific features
Plan	To provide pupils with a clear structure
Write	To apply features in independent writing
Edit	To correct, refine & improve pupil writing
Review	To ensure final piece meets intended purpose & audience



The units begin with ‘immersing’ the children in the text type. Consideration of purpose and audience is vital for effective writing. There are four main purposes for writing: to describe; to narrate, to inform, and to persuade. These are regularly re-visited within the year group and across the school. Within each of these purposes, children will be exposed to a rich range of genres and understand how these influence the writing process. Once pupils have a clear understanding of the purpose and audience, they will move onto analysing a ‘WAGOLL’ (‘What a good one looks like’) of the chosen text type with explicit teaching on structure, word choice and the identification of features and their purpose.

The ‘instruct’ phase of the cycle breaks down the key knowledge and skills required of children to produce their extended writing. Explicit teaching of key features, vocabulary, grammar and

punctuation linked to the KPIs of the year group (and any gaps children may have) allow children to practise writing, and teachers to make formative assessments of their progress. Short bursts of writing build the children's confidence to use the vocabulary precisely in their writing. Teachers then provide children with a clear structure for planning so pupils are supported in organising their ideas as effectively as possible before pupils draft and write their extended piece.

The editing process is focussed on checking whether writing goals are being achieved and strategies used include pupils re-reading their writing and feedback from adults or peers. At this stage, spelling and grammar assume greater importance and pupils will need to recognise that their work will need to be accurate if readers are to engage with it and extract the intended information from it. The planning, drafting, revising and editing process is practised across the school and support is gradually reduced so the child is ultimately capable of completing extended writing independently.

The final stage in the iterative process is the 'publishing' of pupils' work so that others can read it. This may not be the outcome for all pieces of writing, but when used can provide a strong incentive for pupils to produce high-quality writing and encourage them in particular to carefully revise and edit. Teachers may then display work, arrange for presentations to other classes, or send copies to parents and carers. All pupils will complete at least six independent pieces of writing a year.

Transcription

Teachers recognise that it is important to promote basic skills of writing – skills that need to become increasingly automatic so that pupils can concentrate on writing composition. This includes the transcription skills of spelling and handwriting, as well as sentence construction. If these skills are slow and effortful then this will hinder progress in writing composition. High-quality practice is essential to develop fluent transcription skills.

Handwriting – Accurate letter formation is an essential early skill that forms the basis of a fluent handwriting style. Our handwriting progression follows six stages (as outlined from The National Handwriting Association) beginning with 'Pre-writing experience' in EYFS and moving into 'Letter Formation' and 'Letter Positioning' in Key Stage One. 'Joining' begins in year two moving into 'Fluency' and 'Speed' as children progress across Key Stage Two. Teachers recognise that pupils may face barriers in handwriting. In understanding the development of handwriting across the school, teachers are able to implement whole class and individual interventions to support hand strengthening, the development of fine motor skills and correct posture and pencil grip.

Spelling – Fast and accurate spelling of extensive vocabulary is a key component of writing fluency. Evidence shows that spelling should be actively taught rather than simply tested. In year 1 and the beginning of year 2, spelling is taught through the Read, Write, Inc phonics programme. Phonics provides a foundation for effective spelling but is not the only skill needed. Starting in year 2, teachers follow the spelling programme 'Rising Stars'. 'Rising Stars Spelling' provides a lively and flexible programme to teach every spelling focus in the curriculum. Spelling is taught through fun investigative activities, starter challenges and hands-on resources. Pupils are tested weekly on key rules and vocabulary.

Grammar – A large amount of practice, supported by effective feedback, is required to develop fluency. Across the school, grammar is taught both through literacy lessons and discrete sessions. In Key Stage One, the first literacy lesson of the week is dedicated to a grammar or punctuation focus relevant to the text. Grammar is also taught and consolidated through phonics sessions. In lower Key Stage Two, Atwood is currently participating in the pilot phase of the 'Grammar Mastery' scheme involving twice weekly sessions. In Year 5, the year 4 units of the scheme are being taught to close gaps as a result of school closures. In year 6, grammar has a SATs focus with the aim of consolidation and gap-closing before pupils begin secondary school.