



Being a Writer at St Chad's



“Reading is like breathing in, and writing is like breathing out.”

Pam Allyn

This quote perfectly summarises our English curriculum at St Chad's. With a view of developing children who see themselves as readers and writers, we offer engaging and supportive reading and writing opportunities, which help to develop our children's understanding of the world around them .



The 5C's of Learning

Alongside St Chad's vision of 'learning to love, loving to learn', St Chad's 5C's of learning drive the creation of our curriculum. Further information as to how the 5C's of learning positively support the teaching of writing, reading and oracy can be identified in the table below.

St Chad's 5 C's	How are the 5Cs used within English?
Community	• Visits and Visitors, including virtual events • Carefully chosen fiction and non-fiction books in school, which can enrich children's understanding of the world around them • 'Book at Bedtime' after school event
Communication	• Oracy skills teaching, progression and opportunities woven through our English and wider curriculum • Teacher's 'think aloud' while modelling and discussing writing • All children receive structure, modelled, guided reading at least three times a week • Stem sentences support learners • Language interventions, such as NELI and TalkBoost, close the gap for our learners who need more support • Speech and Language Therapist in school • Use of dual coding to support communication development
Curiosity	• We buy books that are intended to spark interest and excitement from our learners • Books used for writing often have cross-curricular links to support our children's growing understanding of the world around them • Children are encouraged to ask questions, think deeper and wonder
Collaboration	• End of unit oracy projects are often partner / group presentations or discussions • Children read with their 'reading buddies' every half term • We use regular peer assessment and whole class conferencing to move our learning forward • We work together to co-plan our sentences and ideas through the 'we do' section of our lesson's pedagogy
Creativity	• We make links with our wider curriculum • We use carefully chosen texts to spark creativity and interest in our readers, writers and speakers • We celebrate children expressing their ideas through drawings, presentations, discussions and a huge range of different writing opportunities. • We use ICT, colourful semantics, widgit software and different writing devices to support and include all our learners

Writing Intent

At St. Chad's, we place high-quality writing at the heart of our curriculum. We believe that writing is a vital life skill that enables children to communicate ideas, express themselves creatively and engage meaningfully with the world around them. Through a book-based approach, we immerse pupils in rich, diverse texts that broaden their understanding of the world, reflect their identities and experiences, and expose them to ambitious vocabulary and authentic models of written language. These texts act as a stimulus for writing, helping children to understand how authors craft meaning and how they can apply these techniques in their own compositions.

We teach core transcriptional skills systematically and with precision so that children develop secure spelling knowledge, fluent sentence construction and the stamina needed to write at length. Purposeful, focused handwriting sessions ensure pupils form letters accurately and develop a neat, consistent style that supports confident, sustained writing. Spoken language underpins our writing curriculum; children learn to articulate ideas clearly, rehearse language orally and use talk as a tool for thinking. They take part in purposeful discussions, debates and presentations that strengthen their ability to communicate effectively and prepare them for writing with clarity and control. Well-trained staff deliver targeted support to any pupils who encounter barriers with writing.

Through this we aim to help our children:

- Develop a life-long enjoyment of writing and pride in their work;
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently for a range of purposes and audiences;
- Apply secure transcriptional skills, including spelling and punctuation, with increasing independence;
- Build stamina to write at length while maintaining quality and control;
- Develop well-formed, fluent handwriting that supports confident composition;
- Use spoken language effectively to shape ideas, rehearse vocabulary and strengthen written outcomes;
- Communicate confidently across the curriculum and into their future education.

Writing in the EYFS Curriculum

The sharing of stories sits at the heart of our EYFS curriculum and provides the foundation for early writing. Through daily **Drawing Club** sessions, inspired by Greg Bottrill's approach, children step into rich story worlds where they use their imaginations to create characters, settings and problems. Each session begins with a high-quality story stimulus, and children are invited to "unlock the magic" by drawing, talking and inventing ideas. This playful, narrative-driven approach nurtures creativity, builds confidence and helps children understand that their ideas have value and can be communicated through mark-making and early writing.

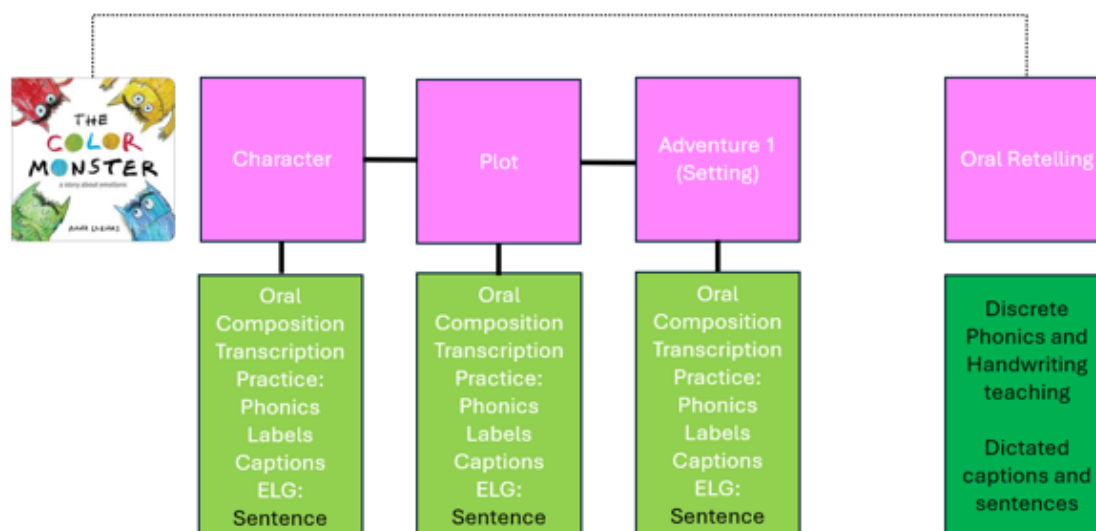
Oracy is central to Drawing Club and to our wider EYFS practice. Children are encouraged to talk about their drawings, share their ideas and build vocabulary through purposeful discussion. Adults model rich language, extend children's thinking and support them to use new words in meaningful contexts. Throughout continuous provision, adults co-play with children, sensitively joining their imaginative worlds and providing authentic opportunities for mark-making, oral language development and writing within the environment.

Fine motor development is carefully planned for and embedded across the provision. Children engage in a wide range of activities that strengthen hand and finger muscles, such as threading, using tweezers, cotton-bud painting, dough disco, playdough manipulation, cutting and writing in sand. These experiences build the physical readiness needed for confident writing. Letter formation is explicitly taught in small groups, with adults guiding children to develop secure habits, correct grip and increasing control as they progress.

Through this integrated, story-rich and play-based approach, our youngest learners begin to see themselves as writers—creative, capable and full of ideas worth sharing.

An Example Writing Unit (EYFS)

EYFS: Drawing club



Transcriptional Skills

Spelling

In Key Stage 1, spelling and phonics are taught through **Little Wandle**, ensuring a consistent, structured approach to early transcriptional skills. In Key Stage 2, we use **Essential Spelling** to build on this foundation. We do not move on to new content until at least 70% of the class are 80% secure or higher with previously taught spelling patterns. This ensures deep understanding and prevents pupils from being rushed through content

before they are ready. Children who need additional support receive targeted guidance through personal verbal feedback and tailored intervention.

Handwriting

Handwriting is taught through Little Wandle's progression from EYFS to Year 2, with cursive joins introduced in Year 2. Across the school, handwriting is taught for 15–20 minutes up to four times a week, giving children regular, focused practice. Personal support, scaffolding and clear next steps ensure that all children make progress from their individual starting points. The '4 Ps' – posture, pencil grip, paper position and pressure are shared with the children, their importance is explained and the application of these is supported and monitored. This structured approach helps pupils develop well-formed, fluent handwriting that supports confident composition.

The 4 Ps

Little Wandle 'Ready to Write' Rhyme:

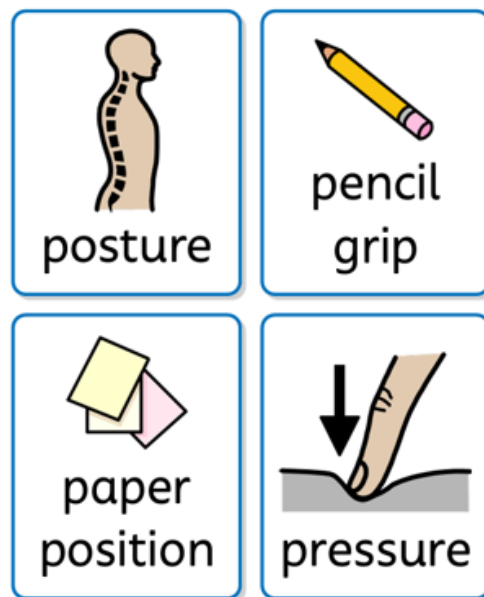
'Ready to write' rhyme

Let's sit up straight, feet nice and flat,
Tilt your paper – just like that!
Pinch your pencil, give it a flip,
Check your hold and then your grip.
Now we can begin to write,
But not too hard and not too light.



Widigt Symbols:

The 4 Ps



Writing Composition

At St Chad's, our English curriculum is closely connected to our wider, topic-based curriculum. We immerse children in a language-rich environment where carefully chosen, high-quality texts excite, enthuse and inspire them. Every text is chosen carefully to capture children's imagination, broaden their understanding of the world and expose them to a wide range of genres and text types. These texts act as a stimulus for purposeful writing opportunities, many of which link directly to wider curriculum learning. Through this approach, children learn to write with meaning, confidence and creativity, drawing on rich vocabulary and strong models of authorial craft.

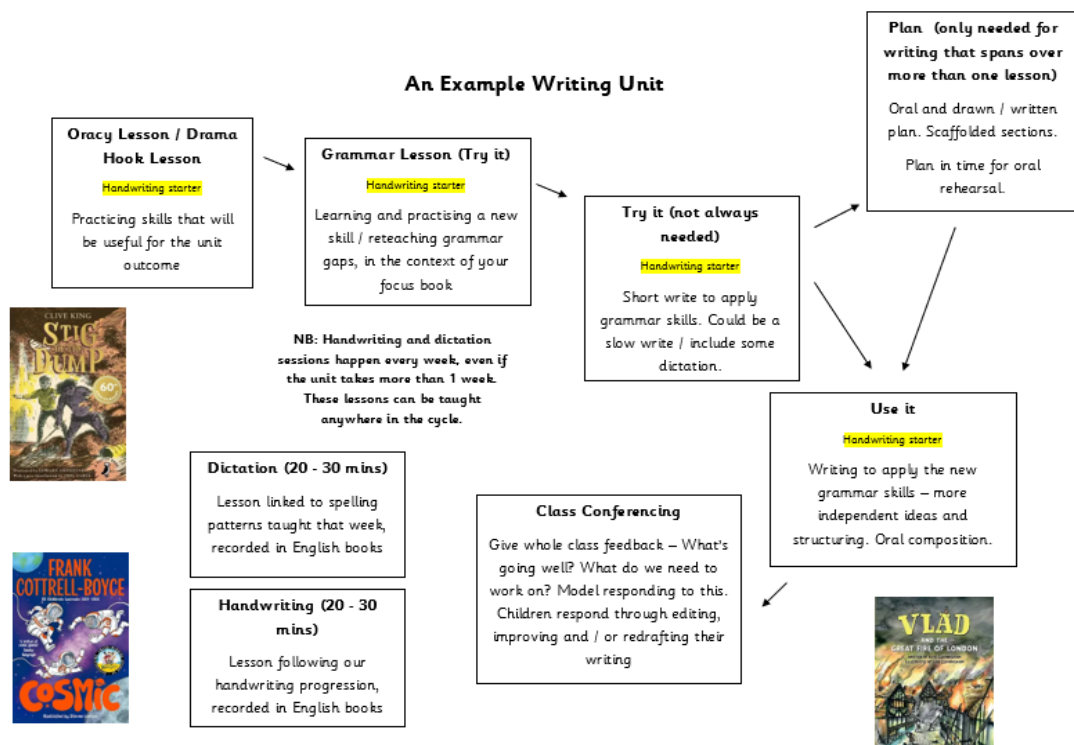
Across the school, high-quality picture books provide a rich stimulus for writing. Books are chosen for their language, diversity, creativity and connection to current curriculum units. Children immerse themselves in these texts through drama, speaking and listening, story mapping and other oral rehearsal techniques. They then respond with a variety of writing opportunities that build confidence, imagination and compositional skills.

In KS2 we introduce a range of carefully planned chapter books, which are often linked to our wider curriculum topics. These texts are sequenced progressively so that, by the end of Year 6, pupils can write with purpose and control in a range of real-life contexts. Modelled and shared writing remain central across the school, helping children understand authorial choices and apply these techniques in their own writing.

Across all year groups, spelling, punctuation and grammar are taught discreetly during the first half of the academic year. These skills are then woven carefully into responses to class texts, ensuring children apply them meaningfully rather than in isolation. Marking ladders support pupils by reminding them of the focus for each piece of writing and providing examples of key skills. Once a skill has been taught, teachers continue to model it—even when it is not the focus of the lesson—encouraging children to follow a *Try it – Use it – Prove it* approach.

When pupils are confidently applying a range of spelling, punctuation and grammar features in their writing, we move on to teaching the broader features of text types. This structure allows children to secure word and sentence-level skills first, before exploring how whole texts are organised. Because pupils are constantly immersed in high-quality literature and strong teacher modelling, many already recognise key text-type features before they are formally taught.

Across all year groups, we ensure every child can access our writing curriculum through carefully planned scaffolds and adaptive teaching strategies. Oral rehearsal, drama and talk-rich activities help pupils organise their ideas before writing, while adapted materials and dual-coded resources make learning clear and manageable for those who need it. Teachers model each step explicitly and provide structured prompts, visual supports and shared writing opportunities so that all children — including those with SEND — can learn alongside their peers and experience success as confident, capable writers.



Writing Environment

Every classroom at St Chad's has a writing working wall, which has the key learning from that day on it. By focusing these walls on essential knowledge, we reduce extraneous load and support children's cognitive processing. Working walls include rich vocabulary, writer's toolkits and annotated modelled examples of different text types. These prompts encourage independence and help children engage actively with their learning environment.

All classes also have a range of learning mats available to support writing. Some mats remain on tables consistently, such as phonics mats, others are provided to support particular text types or curriculum units, such as a Great Fire of London word mat or an Instructions Features mat. These resources help children access vocabulary, structure and key knowledge when they need it.

Monitoring

Regular monitoring ensures that standards in the teaching of writing remain consistently high across the school. A range of monitoring activities are carried out throughout the year, including learning walks, book looks, governor visits, pupil conferencing and discussions with staff. Writing outcomes are reviewed to ensure that pupils are making strong progress in transcriptional and compositional skills, and that high-quality texts are being used effectively to inspire writing. Feedback from any form of monitoring is acted upon promptly, with adjustments made to teaching, planning or provision where needed to secure the best outcomes for all pupils.

Impact

Our intended impact is:

- : • Pupils will leave St Chad's as confident, capable writers who take pride in their work
- Pupils of all abilities will be able to express themselves clearly and coherently across the curriculum
 - Pupils will apply secure transcriptional skills—including spelling, punctuation and handwriting—with increasing independence
- Pupils will develop the stamina to write at length while maintaining accuracy, clarity and control
- Pupils will use spoken language effectively to shape ideas, rehearse vocabulary and strengthen written outcomes
- Pupils' writing skills will improve year on year, in line with age-related expectations
- The percentage of pupils working at EXS within each year group will be at least in line with national averages
- The percentage of pupils working at GDS within each year group will be at least in line with national averages
- There will be no significant gaps in the progress of different groups of pupils (e.g. FSM vs non-FSM children)