



Writing at Harvills Hawthorn

Intention

At Harvills Hawthorn, our mission is for all of our pupils to be the very best they can be. It is our intention to provide them with a high-quality English education, through the teaching of writing.

We strive to ensure that our pupils are enthusiastic writers who can write fluently and communicate their ideas effectively. Our pupils will be able to plan, revise and evaluate their writing. To be able to do this successfully, they will focus on developing effective transcription and composition. They will develop an awareness of purpose, audience and format and use an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar. All pupils will leave school being able to use fluent, legible, cursive handwriting. We develop our pupils' ability to spell words correctly, using their knowledge of spelling rules and of how common phonemes are spelt.

Implementation

At Harvills Hawthorn Primary School, we pride ourselves on the consistent approach to teaching and learning that can be observed across all phases of school. This is achieved through our commitment to cutting edge, research-based CPD in addition to quality-first teaching on a daily basis. Expectations of staff and pupils are high, resulting in good or outstanding progress in all phases. There is a universal understanding of what great teaching, learning and assessment should entail. These strategies are consistently used throughout school and it is the expectation of leadership that all lessons will include a variety of these to enable learners to reach their full potential. Active learning is essential in all aspects of the lesson. All staff use the same terminology so that learners develop a knowledge and understanding of the different ways they learn.

At Harvills, we believe great teaching, learning and assessment must include the following:

- Understanding the Content
- Creating a Supportive Environment
- Maximising Opportunities to Learn
- Activating Hard Thinking (building ratio)

Each lesson begins with 'Rapid Retrieval' designed to improve children's retrieval skills. The purpose of this is to revisit prior learning in order to improve long term memory. Teachers ensure that Rapid Retrieval includes both recent learning and learning from previous topics.



We are working hard to promote our pupils' English and ensure that they all achieve to the very best of their ability. Pupils are encouraged to read widely and often. English is fundamental to all subjects. Consequently, we believe that all stakeholders have a role to play in supporting and developing our pupils' English skills to ensure they can communicate effectively in today's society. All children are expected to follow our school's non-negotiables for presentation. This includes a focus on learning to write in the cursive script.

The delivery of writing at Harvills Hawthorn

At Harvills Hawthorn Primary School, we have designed an English curriculum, with reference to the National Curriculum Programme of Study, that meets the needs of our pupils. Transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech and writing) are the key focuses: it is essential that teaching develops pupils' competence in these two areas. In addition, pupils are taught how to plan, revise and evaluate their writing.

- Although writing is an integral part of all lessons, new learning is introduced and taught discretely.
- In Key Stage One, English lessons are an hour long.
- In Key Stage Two, English lessons are an hour long.

English Lesson Structure

- A 5-minute Rapid Retrieval activity with a focus on the retrieval of prior learning.
- 15 minutes of teaching and modelling the new concepts, using the I/we/you do approach.
- 30 minutes of independent/group/paired or adult supported learning.
- 10-minute plenary that includes AfL.

The Writing Journey at Harvills Hawthorn

- Quality texts are used to supplement the pupils' writing.
- Pupils write for a range of purposes and audiences.
- Across each term, pupils will produce fiction and non-fiction pieces of writing.
- Pupils will begin the writing journey by identifying the PAF (purpose, audience and format).
- Talk for Writing strategies are used throughout the unit of learning.
- A quality text will be shared with the pupils and this will be analysed to identify the language and structural features.
- A crucial part of the writing journey is the opportunity to explore vocabulary for purpose. Pupils will 'magpie' appropriate words/phrases in order to create a bank of vocabulary that is suitable for the PAF.
- Grammar and punctuation objectives, which suit the text type, will be taught. They should, where possible, be taught in context and not discretely.



- Pupils will plan their writing in the most appropriate way: story map, planning burger, boxing up, etc.
- Teachers will use short burst shared writing sessions throughout the journey to model writing.
- Pupils will be given time to write independently. This may be broken down into sections.
- Pupils/teachers will assess the independent writing against the success criteria.
- In Years 2-6, pupils will edit their writing using GAPS
- In KS2, pupils will redraft, using ARMS, to produce a P.O.P. (paragraph of perfection)

Grammar and Punctuation at Harvills Hawthorn

- Each year group has grammar objectives that they are to cover in each term.
- Where appropriate, these objectives should be taught in context so that the pupils can utilise ideas within their independent writing.

Spelling at Harvills Hawthorn

- As a school, we use Spelling Shed to supplement our teaching of spelling.
- Each week, pupils will be allocated a list of 8 words in KS2 to learn how to spell. Four of these words will follow a spelling pattern relevant to the year group; two words will be taken from the word list for the year group; and two words will be previously taught words so that pupils are retrieving previous learning. These words will be tested each week. There will be 7 words each week in KS1.
- Children are tested at the end of blocks 1, 3 and 5 on the word list words and their progress is tracked by the class teacher and the English lead.

Shared Writing at Harvills Hawthorn

- Teachers model writing, in short bursts, throughout the writing journey. They will focus the learning on newly taught skills, composition, effect and syntax.
- Teachers develop pupils' vocabulary by challenging their word choices and by introducing more advanced vocabulary.
- Teachers will model the script appropriate to the year group: print in EYFS and Year 1, pre-cursive in Year 2 and continuous cursive in Year 3-6.
- In Years 2-6, every pupil has a writing journal which is used to retrieve previously taught SPaG.
- Talk and Thought book are used to 'magpie' words and phrases to support their independent writing.

Handwriting at Harvills Hawthorn (see separate handwriting policy for more detail)

- At all times, adults supporting the learning of our pupils will model the handwriting expectations of the year group or the stage the child is working at.



Handwriting in Nursery

- In Nursery, children will be encouraged to develop gross motor control through the use of large equipment for mark making such as big chalks, paint brushes, finger paints, shaving foam, etc. We use the Squiggle While You Wiggle and Dough Disco programmes.

Squiggle While You Wiggle

Squiggle While You Wiggle is an early writing programme created by Shonette Bason. It uses dance and large movements to help children develop the fine muscle control they need for writing. They will learn a new gross motor movement to a piece of music and will dance using this movement. They also use it to make marks in foam, on paper, in sand, etc. The children then use this action to think of letters they can form that use this shape. These sessions help our children to be confident mark makers.

Disco Dough

Disco Dough helps to strengthen children's fine motor muscles to enable them to develop their pencil grip which in turn will help to develop their writing skills. Dough Disco involves moulding play dough in time to music and performing different actions such as rolling it into a ball, flattening it, putting each individual finger into the dough, rolling it into a sausage and squeezing it.

They will develop their fine motor skills and use a range of mark making tools such as pencils, pens and crayons. They will be encouraged to talk about shapes and movement. They will practise the main handwriting movements for the three basic letter shapes: c, l and r. As the children progress, they will be taught to form letters correctly, using Bug Club Phonics mnemonics (see appendix 1).

Handwriting in Reception

- In Reception, children will be taught to form letters using Bug Club Phonics mnemonics.
- Letter formation is taught alongside phonic development. Our aim is that by the end of Reception, all children will be able to hold a pencil correctly and form all letters and numbers correctly too.
- Errors in pencil grip and letter formation will be immediately addressed, modelled and corrected.
- Initially, Reception children will use unlined paper as the focus is correct formation rather than size or positioning.
- Once ready, children will be moved to using lined paper.

Handwriting in Key Stage 1

Year 1

- In Year 1, all children should receive a daily handwriting session for 10-15mins. (This may be as part of a BCP session). There will be a greater focus on letter sizing and positioning.
- In Year 1, children will continue to be taught to print, with the focus on letter formation.



Year 2

- In Year 2, during blocks 1 and 2, pre-cursive handwriting will be introduced.

Pre-cursive is where each letter has a lead-in and exit flick.

It is important to learn how to form letters correctly to begin with, as this makes the transition from single letter formation to joined letter handwriting much easier. For this reason, the letters are taught in sets.

Handwriting in Lower Key Stage 2

- In Year 3, most children will be ready to move from pre-cursive to continuous cursive by joining letters together to form words.
- A child is ready to join letters when:
 - They have learnt to form all the lower-case letters correctly.
 - Letters are of a consistent and suitable size (for younger children these may be large in size but consistent).
 - Letters are positioned appropriately on the writing line as well as in relation to one another.
- Weekly handwriting lessons are taught in Year 3 and Year 4.
- Our aim is that, by the end of Year 4, children will be forming all letters correctly and joining using a continuous cursive script.
- If any children are not on track to reach these expectations, they will receive additional support through small group intervention groups.

Handwriting in Upper Key Stage 2

- In Years 5 and 6, many children are confident in using the continuous cursive script. However, handwriting practice is a focus.
- For those who have not yet mastered the continuous cursive script, handwriting interventions are delivered so that the teaching of this script takes place.
- In Years 5 and 6, children will be expected to use continuous cursive handwriting in all areas of the curriculum.
- If any children are not on track to reach these expectations, they will receive additional support through small group intervention groups.

Joining Letter Teaching Sequence

At Harvills Hawthorn, we teach the different join types in specific groups to help a child to understand the directional pushes and pulls required to successfully join the different letter combinations. Please see our handwriting policy for more information.

Impact

The impact of our curriculum is clear: progress, sustained learning and transferrable skills. Pupils will make at least good progress from their individual starting points. The writing journey will support pupils to become more confident writers by the time they leave Harvills Hawthorn Primary School at the end of Key Stage 2. Our pupils will be able to write for a range of purposes and audiences, manipulating grammar and punctuation. They will be creative writers with a passion for English.

Ultimately, we aim to fulfill our school's vision: to prepare our children for the next stage of their lives to enable them to contribute positively to their community.