



Chawson First School Writing policy November 2025

This policy outlines the guiding principles by which this school will implement the teaching of Speaking, Listening and Writing. It will be reviewed periodically.

1. Rationale

Speaking, listening and writing are integral components of the National Curriculum for English. At Chawson First School, we believe that speaking, listening and writing are essential, interconnected skills that underpin effective communication, learning and self-expression. As a Voice 21 Oracy Centre of Excellence, oracy sits at the heart of our curriculum. We believe that children must first be able to *say it* before they can *write it*—spoken language provides the foundation for successful writing.

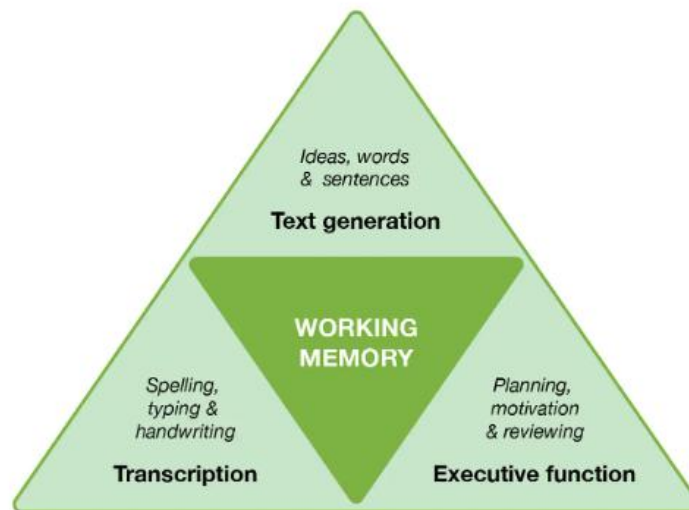
High-quality talk is central to our approach. Through structured opportunities for discussion, dialogue and sentence rehearsal, children learn to think critically, listen actively, articulate ideas clearly and engage respectfully with others. These experiences underpin their development as confident writers, enabling them to internalise language structures, organise their thinking, and compose with clarity and purpose.

We place equal emphasis on transcriptional fluency—spelling, handwriting and sentence construction—recognising that mastery of these foundational skills is essential for writing proficiency. Systematic and consistent teaching supports all pupils in becoming fluent, accurate and independent writers.

Writing is taught daily as a discrete lesson, focusing on composition, grammar and authorial voice, and is also embedded across the wider curriculum to provide meaningful contexts for writing. Oracy opportunities are woven throughout all subjects, enabling pupils to explore, rehearse and articulate ideas before writing. Discrete sessions in spelling, handwriting and dictation further strengthen accuracy, stamina and confidence in the mechanics of writing.

Our approach reflects the Simple View of Writing (Berninger & Amtmann, 2003), which identifies writing as the interaction between two key dimensions: transcription (spelling and handwriting) and text generation (composition and meaning-making), supported by executive functions such as planning, reviewing and self-regulation. At Chawson, we nurture all three components—transcription, composition and executive control—through explicit teaching, scaffolding, guided practice and purposeful writing opportunities grounded in rich oral language experiences.

Figure 10: Based on 'The Simple View of Writing'



<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/how-the-simple-view-of-writing-can-help-you-develop-your-pupils-fluency-in-writing>

Our policy ensures a consistent, whole-school approach to the planning, teaching and assessment of speaking, listening and writing. It reflects our belief that communication is a gateway to learning and equity, preparing children not only for academic success but for life beyond the classroom.

2. Aims

Our writing policy seeks to ensure that all pupils leave our school as confident, motivated, and competent writers, able to express themselves with clarity, creativity, and purpose. Throughout their time with us, pupils will be supported to:

Oracy and Language Development

- Adapt language and tone appropriately for different audiences and purposes.
- Demonstrate active listening skills, responding thoughtfully and respectfully to others.
- Recall, discuss, and apply key learning to show understanding and retention.
- Communicate ideas clearly and confidently in a range of contexts.
- Use full, accurate sentences to support coherent spoken and written expression.
- Recognise and employ a variety of language forms, including narrative, informational, dramatic, and poetic styles.

Attitudes to Writing and Motivation

- Develop a positive self-concept as writers with a clear voice and purpose.
- Write independently to communicate ideas, share information, and engage readers.
- Value writing as an enjoyable, meaningful, and transferable skill.
- Appreciate their own and others' ideas as inspiration for creative and purposeful writing.

Transcription and Sentence Construction

- Secure accurate and phonetically plausible spelling.
- Develop fluent, legible, and increasingly joined handwriting.
- Apply appropriate grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure with accuracy and control.

The Writing Process and Composition

- Demonstrate confidence in all stages of the writing process, including idea generation, planning, drafting, editing, and publishing.
- Organise and structure ideas logically using effective planning strategies.
- Edit and refine work independently to enhance clarity, accuracy, and impact.

Purpose, Audience, and Style

- Write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences.
- Adapt tone, structure, and language to suit context and intent.
- Employ a rich and varied vocabulary informed by reading, speaking, and personal experience.
- Demonstrate creativity, imagination, and originality across a variety of genres and forms.

3. Planning Writing Lessons

Our approach to teaching writing is rooted in our clearly defined school aims and delivered through our carefully structured, aspirational curriculum. Pupils have regular, purposeful opportunities to develop and apply their writing skills within meaningful contexts.

Our progressive writing curriculum is built around small-step planning and deliberate practice, enabling children to master specific skills over time. Each year group follows a clearly sequenced long-term plan aligned with the National Curriculum. Build progressively, taking account of prior learning, increasing complexity, and the time needed to develop fluency and confidence.

Revisiting prior learning is central to our approach. Teachers regularly return to previously taught content, ensuring knowledge is reinforced, transferred to long-term memory, and applied with increasing independence. Carefully chosen texts provide rich models of language, vocabulary and structure, inspiring children to write with purpose and see themselves as real writers.

Throughout each unit, children apply their learning through planned writing opportunities. Mid-point and end-point tasks enable teachers to assess progress and help pupils reflect on how well they are using taught skills in extended writing. The length of time spent on each skill is flexible, allowing teachers to respond to class needs and the complexity of the learning focus.

Writing is taught in meaningful contexts and closely linked to reading, oracy, and wider curriculum learning. This connected approach supports children to make links, apply knowledge creatively, and develop a coherent understanding of language and communication. Through this carefully designed curriculum and responsive teaching, all pupils are supported to become confident, capable writers, well-prepared for the next stage of their education.

4. Teaching Writing Lessons

We recognise that strong speaking and listening skills are fundamental to children's overall communication and writing development. As a Voice 21 school, we actively embed oracy into our daily practice, using a wide range of strategies to support children learning to talk and learning through talk. Children regularly engage in structured discussion with peers and adults through whole-class dialogue, group work, and paired talk. Talk partners are used daily to give children frequent opportunities to rehearse ideas, explain their thinking, and build confidence in using spoken language. Drama techniques such as role play, hot-seating, and performances are also used to deepen understanding, promote creativity, and enhance oral expression.

These speaking and listening opportunities are carefully planned to support writing. Children are encouraged to articulate their ideas aloud before writing, an approach that helps them organise their thoughts and vocabulary. Staff model high-quality speaking and listening, using sentence stems and subject-specific language to support pupils' responses. Listening skills, turn-taking, and respectful dialogue are explicitly taught and reinforced across the school. We also extend oracy beyond the classroom with "talk for ten" tasks, allowing children to engage in meaningful discussions at home.

Our writing curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure children are exposed to high-quality models, receive structured opportunities for deliberate practice, and can apply their learning with increasing independence. Lessons are purposefully designed to include meaningful discussion, allowing teachers to check understanding and deepen learning through talk. Writing lessons are typically themed around a topic or high-quality text,

providing a clear and contextualised purpose for writing. Teachers follow a planned sequence of lessons that supports progression and builds on prior knowledge, whilst working towards a final written outcome.

Writing lessons follow the *I do, we do, you do* model to scaffold learning effectively and enable children to develop independence through guided support. This approach allows teachers to explicitly model the writing process, using metacognitive talk to demonstrate the thinking, decisions, and strategies that experienced writers use when composing a piece of writing, no matter the purpose. Pupils then practise collaboratively before applying these skills independently, developing both confidence and competence as writers.

5. Adaptive Teaching

At Chawson, our approach to teaching writing follows a mastery model, ensuring that all children move forward together in their learning. Lessons are designed so that every pupil accesses the same high-quality teaching and core learning objectives, promoting equity and high expectations for all. Where barriers to learning exist, adaptations are made to ensure every child can achieve success. These adaptations follow the C-step model, which guides teachers in making effective adjustments in the areas of Communication, Space, Task, Equipment, and People. This approach enables teachers to identify where additional scaffolding, modelling, or practice is needed before pupils apply their skills independently. Differentiated teaching may be used as an adaptation where appropriate, ensuring that pupils receive the right level of challenge or support to make progress within the shared learning journey. This approach fosters a classroom culture of inclusion, resilience, and collective achievement.

6. Phonics and Spelling Teaching

At Chawson, we are aware of the importance of a sound understanding of phonics, the spelling of irregular words and grammatical rules to facilitate writing.

- Children in Reception enjoy a planned daily phonics session based on the skills progression of “Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised”. Little Wandle is a complete systematic synthetic phonics programme (SSP). The Little Wandle programme follows the children through into Year 1 where they will continue with their phonics learning. In Year 1 the spelling requirements of the National Curriculum are taught alongside this Phonics.
- Children in Year 2 take part in planned daily phonics, continuing and finalising the Little Wandle phonics programme. All spelling lessons follow the familiar structure of Little Wandle phonics lessons, supporting children to make links to their phonics learning. Lessons build on prior knowledge to ensure children always start from a point of secure understanding.
- In Key Stage 2, children receive a discrete spelling session twice a week that involves the teaching of spelling rules as outlined in the national curriculum.
- Intervention groups are used to support children who are not attaining expected levels of phonics and spelling skills.
- The development of phonics skills to support spelling is reinforced through writing lessons as children are encouraged to use their knowledge to support spelling on a daily basis.
- Displays of graphemes appropriate to the children’s expected attainment are accessible in all classrooms.
- Careful use of resources is used to facilitate children being independent in their spelling e.g., word banks and sound mats.
- KS2 have a set of non-negotiable spellings based on KS1 taught words. These words are expected to be picked up and corrected by children when spelt wrong. Each KS2 classroom has these spellings displayed and on word mats.

7. Handwriting Teaching

Our school follows the Penpals Handwriting Scheme, beginning in Reception and continuing progressively through the school. Handwriting is taught as a discrete session multiple times each week, allowing pupils to develop fluency, consistency, and control. Skills taught during these sessions are reinforced across the

curriculum through writing and dictation lessons, ensuring that good handwriting habits are embedded in all written work. There is an increased emphasis on accurate letter formation and correct letter sizing, with teachers modelling and providing feedback to promote precision and pride in presentation. The school is embedding the 'Ready to Write' mantra to promote good posture and readiness for writing. This involves children sitting with feet flat on the floor, bottoms to the back of the chair, backs upright, and their non-writing hand supporting the paper to keep it steady. Handwriting is further supported by the introduction of new exercise books featuring yellow tramlines, which guide pupils in correct letter placement and support the development of consistent letter sizing and alignment.

Progression in handwriting is carefully structured and consistent across the school. In the early years, children focus on developing fine motor skills, pencil control, and correct letter formation. As pupils move through Key Stage 1, they are taught to join letters securely and fluently, with increasing attention to spacing and legibility. By Key Stage 2, pupils are expected to write in a fluent, joined, and legible style that allows them to record their ideas efficiently and with confidence. Consistent expectations and shared language across year groups ensure a cohesive approach, supporting every child in developing a handwriting style that is both personal and purposeful.

Handwriting teaching is adapted where necessary to meet the individual needs of pupils. Teachers carefully assess each child's fine motor development and writing readiness to ensure that teaching is appropriately pitched and supportive. Correct letter formation is prioritised and secured before pupils begin joining, ensuring a strong foundation for fluency and accuracy. Each child is recognised as being on their own handwriting journey, with personalised support and encouragement provided to help them achieve their full potential in developing a legible, confident, and consistent handwriting style.

8. Dictation Lessons

Dictation is used school-wide to strengthen pupils' transcriptional skills by removing the cognitive load of composition. Through dictation, children have the opportunity to focus on accurate spelling, punctuation, and handwriting, enabling them to become more fluent and automatic in the mechanical aspects of writing. Increased fluency in transcription reduces cognitive load during independent writing, allowing pupils to concentrate more effectively on composition and creativity. Dictation lessons integrate multiple aspects of writing — including spelling, handwriting, listening, punctuation, grammar, vocabulary, sentence construction, syntax, and composition — into one cohesive learning experience.

At Chawson, we recognise that a competent writer must possess both strong transcription and composition skills. High-quality transcription is essential for improving the overall quality, accuracy, and fluency of children's writing. Dictation is taught discretely across the school from Year 1, with pupils in Year 1 completing four sessions per week and pupils from Year 2 onwards completing three sessions per week. Sentences are carefully contextualised to make learning meaningful and engaging. Teachers plan sentences that align with current phonics and spelling patterns that have already been taught, providing structured opportunities for retrieval practice and supporting long-term retention of key knowledge.

9. Early Years Foundation Stage

The Reception writing curriculum has been carefully adapted to ensure a progressive, appropriately ambitious, and achievable approach that aligns with the whole-school writing journey. It has been intentionally slowed down to provide children with the time and repetition needed to secure strong early foundations in writing. We recognise that the most effective practice for young learners involves frequent repetition, clear and consistent modelling, and the use of simple, precise language supported by sentence stems. Each writing session follows the *I do, we do, you do* model to scaffold learning effectively. During the *I do* stage, explicit modelling takes place, with staff using metacognitive talk to narrate their thinking, demonstrate success criteria, and show what expert writing looks like. Pupils then participate in shared practice (*we do*), followed by opportunities for independent application (*you do*). Sessions often take place over two or three lessons and are structured to include retrieval, modelling, assessment, and continued practice.

Children's understanding is closely monitored throughout each planned unit, with clear mid- and end-points that help teachers identify pupils who are on track and those who may need additional support or intervention. Writing sequences are planned around high-quality books or engaging topics to ensure learning is contextualised and meaningful. The Reception curriculum focuses on developing children's writing in three key areas: writing orally, writing words, and writing sentences. Teaching is closely aligned with the school's phonics programme so that all writing activities use only taught phonemes and graphemes. This approach reinforces phonics learning, builds accuracy, and ensures children develop early writing confidence and success.

10. Marking and Feedback

Feedback will clearly explain to pupils what they're doing well, and what they need to do next to continue to improve their work. Verbal feedback or 'in-the moment' feedback will be given where possible to allow children to fully understand and act on feedback when it is most relevant. Teachers will give feedback on spelling and handwriting as well as writing content.

Our school marking policy will provide further detail on the expectations of marking in books.

11. Assessment and Moderation

We will track pupils' progress using a combination of formative and summative assessment. Teachers will assess through ongoing formative assessment throughout every lesson, and use this to influence any changes needed to lesson planning. Ongoing assessment allows teachers to adapt within a lesson when a child/ group of children may need additional support or further scaffolding.

Teachers moderated an independent piece of written work three times a year. This supportive process allows teachers to make accurate, consistent judgements on children's progress and supports outlining the next steps. This is a collaborative process that ensures consistency across a year group in knowing what a child working at the expected standard looks like.

12. Homework

'Talk for Ten' is a whole-school weekly homework initiative designed to promote spoken language and meaningful communication. It encourages families to come together to discuss a set topic, supporting the development of children's confidence, vocabulary, and communication skills beyond the classroom. Each task includes a conversation starter and sentence stems to guide discussion and ensure it is accessible and engaging for all ages. This approach strengthens oracy, deepens understanding, and reinforces the importance of talk as a foundation for effective writing.

13. Review

This Speaking, Listening and Writing policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure that it reflects current practice in the teaching of Literacy at Chawson Community First School.