

Our Curriculum Vision

Everything we do, at Lanercost CE Primary School, stems from our children having a life-long love of learning. We are proud of our inclusive environment, which is firmly rooted in a shared Christian ethos and fosters the care and nurture of our school community. As a school, in partnership with parents and carers, we strive to build strong foundations for an excellent education. We enable our children to achieve all of their divine potential by inspiring them and promoting opportunities to delight in their learning as well as allowing them to grow into successful, compassionate, young adults who recognise their role in the community and the ever-changing wider world.

We aim to accomplish this through a loving, structured and joyful environment with consistently high standards of teaching. Our engaging and immersive learning is based upon the National Curriculum (2014), developed from a love of reading and reflects our school's unique circumstances. We make the most of our beautiful location, which is a stone's throw from Hadrian's Wall, Lanercost Priory, Naworth Castle and close to Northumbria National Park.

This brave, broad and rich curriculum motivates all of our children to build concepts, skills and knowledge for life. They become curious learners who are led by enquiry and inspired by a range of real-life experiences and cultural enrichment. Each of our subject leaders has worked hard to craft their subject curriculum to ensure this within their subject.

We know that the greatest way to understand school-life is to become a part of your child's learning journey. We aim to run several shared learning events, workshops and cultural enrichment moments that you can participate in, allowing you to see your child's progress and ventures in school. Please see our school website, social media platforms and school newsletter for the latest parent and community events.

Our vision for our curriculum comes directly from our whole school vision. It has been carefully crafted by our teaching staff in order to ensure that we provide an education that helps every child reach their divine potential and enables them to have a life-long love of learning. Each of our subject-leaders has then designed their subject to stem from an evidence-basis where our vision is threaded through at every point.

Our Vision for Writing

At Lanercost Primary School, the teaching of writing is of paramount importance within a broad and balanced curriculum. Our aim is to ensure that every child within our school, regardless of background and potential learning difficulties, leaves our school as a competent writer, with an understanding of the conventions of Standard English, and when to use it effectively. This ability to write with confidence, for a range of purposes and audiences, ensures that children leave Lanercost Primary School fully prepared for their secondary education, ready to achieve their aspirations and thrive in their adult life.

The writing curriculum we adopt, encourages children to immerse themselves in different text types, understand the features and impact of these, and realise the importance of them beyond education. A secure knowledge of spelling and grammar and an understanding of how to edit writing is taught throughout the school in a systematic and progressive way. The content of writing lessons is planned to build on children's previous knowledge as well as introduce new learning in a fun and memorable way. Writing at Lanercost Primary School is developed within an immersive environment- the range of curriculum opportunities we provide, allow children to write from an experienced point of view and that is incredibly important to us. We aim for all children to leave Lanercost Primary School with a deep understanding of different text types and how to construct them effectively with clear purpose.

Our Teaching and Learning of Writing

High quality books, within the reading and writing curriculum, is at the heart of our school's recently implemented approach to engage and support children to become motivated and independent readers and subsequently confident writers. We use relevant and high-quality texts to extend and engage our pupils. Recently, we have changed our approach to respond to the changing needs of children who attend our school and we are now in the process of evolving a high-quality literacy curriculum which develops reading comprehension and writing composition, and fosters a whole school love of reading and writing.

At Lanercost, we put quality children's literature at the heart of literacy learning. All teachers have developed their subject knowledge and use this daily to ensure engagement and attainment in language, vocabulary, spelling and writing composition and meet all the requirements of the National Curriculum.

A well-chosen text provides rich language models and structures from which children can learn how writing works and the effect it can have on a reader. To create confident young writers, reading aloud and sharing high quality texts across a range of genres, reflecting a range of writing styles is essential. We use texts that are rich in vocabulary, and enable children to comprehend beyond their own reading fluency level.

We feel it is essential to create a rich reading environment that demonstrates the written word in all its forms and shares how writing can be used for thinking, for communication and as a means of

expression. With a rich diet of quality texts and enriching experiences children will be able to find their own reasons to write and develop a style that fits the purpose, audience and form intended.

From the earliest stages of writing, it is paramount, that children understand that writing is a means of expression and a communication tool. We know a culture of book talk deepens reader response and allows children to explore the effect that the author of a text has created on the reader. We give children opportunities to reflect on their own texts in the same way.

At Lanercost, the teaching of writing is most effective when children see the use in it; when there is real, authentic purpose; when there is an audience that authenticates their voice, whether themselves or another reader. Creating opportunities for writing inspired by meaningful events and experiences in texts and real life. This provides the children with ways in to talking and writing about their own feelings, experiences and interests and, with purpose in mind, begin to think about their audience and adapt their tone accordingly. Children take pleasure in a reader's feedback and begin to link writing with communication. As staff, we recognise the importance of validating children's writing with appropriate response, focusing first on the effect that the writing has on the reader. Within lessons from Early Years, right through to Year 6, every child experiences opportunities to explore texts, drawings, illustrations, drama activities, poetry, partner work and many more teaching approaches. These are all woven into each lesson to create an authentic writing journey for the children we teach.

In Early Years, children use 'Drawing Club' designed by Greg Bottrill. The approach has a huge focus on vocabulary and developing early writing skills through stories, drawing and language. 'The one thing that the world of story has to have is magic, and Drawing Club is the golden key to open the door to it for children and go on an adventure with them.' This approach is developed specifically for early years and thus focuses in on children's early experiences of literacy through the following areas:

- Immerse children in the world of story and unearth their imaginations
- Develop a wide range of skills across the whole curriculum in 'one hit'
- Give the opportunity to gather evidence of progress through progressive activities
- Develop children's creative streaks as well as their ability to share ideas and skills
- Give children age-appropriate practice that is highly engaging and links with our 'curiosity approach'.

In Y1-Y6, children follow a progressive cycle through CUSP (The Curriculum with Unity Schools Partnership), which usually takes between 1 and 2 weeks. Throughout the unit, the children may cover the following aspects to develop their understanding and deepen their learning:

- Step 1: Immerse the children into the text/genre/audience and purpose
We want our readers to have the same responses we had when reading the story/text stimulus. Starting from this angle helps the children see the impact their writing needs to have. This step often uses drama techniques to elicit reactions and feelings.
- Step 2: Vocabulary gathering and application e.g. technical/emotive

Gather specific vocabulary and emotive language examples. Allow time for children to practice new vocabulary and how this can be used in the context given.

- **Step 3: Grammar application building to sentence level and paragraph level**
Focus on grammatical skills needed to be successful within the given genre. There may be more than one focus during this stage and children are provided with many opportunities to practice this. Once children have practiced the skill at a sentence level, they are then given opportunities to apply these in the form of a paragraph.
- **Step 4: Planning**
Children plan their writing with consideration to all previous steps. Children may refer to the model used in Step 2. The style of planning is left to teachers' professional judgements and the recommendations within the CUSP planning. Children needing support may be given additional scaffolds, headings and prompts to aide the planning stage. This are used alongside the knowledge organiser and any relevant knowledge notes.
- **Step 6: Writing**
Children are given time to write up their work. The amount of time varies depending on the age of children and genre of writing. At this point, staff remind children of their purpose and 'non-negotiables' for writing e.g. handwriting, punctuation etc.
- **Step 7: Editing**
Children reflect on their writing and make appropriate changes. Editing is heavily dependent on the age of the children. In Y1/2 children may have a specific are to focus on for editing e.g. the grammar focus for the unit. In Y5/6 children may complete more open-ended editing to target a number of areas. In addition to this, editing may happen at the end of the writing unit, or as small chunks throughout.

The steps run through each sequence and provide a progressive coverage across the school. However, there may be times when some steps are completed in a different order to allow teachers to extend or deepen certain activities e.g. Step 2 may come at the very start of a unit, or at the planning phase.

Within each lesson, the children follow the following more specific steps:

Connect- This is a moment to reflect on previously taught content that may be relevant to this unit of learning. This is generally grammar based and allows the children opportunities to discuss and deepen their existing knowledge.

Explain- This is a teacher modelled opportunity to explore a new piece of vocabulary/grammar term. Our teachers will use this time to discuss the new term being explored and allow opportunities for discussion where needed to secure the new focus.

Example- This is the second teacher modelled aspect to the lesson. During this time, staff will model the new learning focus being covered within the session. This could be some specific and deliberate

practice of a new grammar element, or it could be modelling how to write in a given format. This provides an in the moment model/example to the children.

Attempt- Children will have a go, following the model given by the teacher, and complete a similar task to the one used in the example. Again, allowing the children to practice a specific skill in a deliberate way.

Apply/Challenge- Children will then have the opportunity to apply the practice and discussions had from earlier in the session to a more open and extended piece of writing. This could be practice within a paragraph or additional sentences created by each child.

In addition to writing lessons, we teach spelling discretely for 15 minutes each day. This is done through focused teaching sessions following Read Write Inc, to ensure the children develop the technical skills needed to reflect the writing they want to produce.

We use the Read Write Inc Phonics Scheme from Early Years up to Year 2 for spellings. In addition to learning the various phonemes and graphemes needed to engage in our literacy curriculum, the phonics scheme develops each child as a speller using techniques such as 'Fred talk' and 'Fred's fingers'. Once the children have mastered Read Write Inc Phonics (within Year 2 for most children), children move on to Read Write Inc Spellings, which run throughout the rest of the school. These sessions are taught daily and teach the children the necessary spelling rules to support their writing process as they develop through their primary education. Because we teach mixed-age classes, there is some flexibility within the spelling teaching to allow each class to focus on the same tasks (e.g. all of Year 5 and 6 may focus on year five spellings for the first year, then Year 6 spellings the year after). Then we use timely interventions and top-up sessions where needed for children who need support or stretch. Once children have finished their year groups Read Write Inc Spelling Rules (Y3-6), they complete deepening and consolidatory activities to ensure the new spelling rules are being applied and used correctly; these activities include word lists with appropriate spellings to consolidate and puzzles to apply their knowledge. In addition to the taught sounds throughout these spelling sessions, all classes working on RWI spellings will work through the linked log books to develop and secure CEW spellings. Weekly spellings are sent home as homework in Y1-6 to consolidate the rules taught through phonics or spelling sessions and to practice CEW or HF words.

Handwriting is taught from Early Years using the Read Write Inc Phonics scheme. Children become familiar with letter formation as they learn each letter sound. As the children progress through the Read Write Inc Phonics scheme, they refine their handwriting skills to ensure the letters are correctly formed and appropriately sized. Once the children are working in 'Yellow' group, they are introduced to joined handwriting (this is usually in Year 1 or 2). Children are taught how to create joins between letters and when to use a join. By the time children begin KS2, most are using a joined style, and at this point, we introduce 'lead-ins' for those children who are ready for them. We feel the lead-ins help to develop a more fluent style and thus create a better writing speed. In KS2, the children (unless still in phonics) receive handwriting support/lessons as and when needed. In Lower Key Stage two this is much more frequent than in Upper Key Stage two, where children have generally mastered their neat and legible style.

Supporting Teaching and Learning of Writing

Writing and the ability to write confidently can have a significant impact on attainment and confidence in other curriculum areas. Because of this, we ensure all children are supported throughout their time in Primary School to ensure that their writing is a tool that can be used with confidence and joy.

Children who are struggling with writing may receive any of the following interventions:

- Additional Phonics support
- Additional Spelling support
- Precision Teach
- Fluency Support in a group or 1:1
- Handwriting and fine motor skills development
- Doodle English and Doodle Spell
- Writing intervention (with a focus on content)
- Vocabulary support (through reading sessions)
- Speech and Language support

These interventions are used in addition to the quality first teaching in all English lessons across the school. Children from EYFS through to Year 6 are continually monitored on their writing journey to ensure that the correct interventions are put into place promptly. For children who have significant additional needs, multiple interventions may be necessary. Please see the English Curriculum page for more detailed information about the interventions currently running within the school.

Furthering the Teaching and Learning of Writing

Children in all classes are encouraged to develop their own writing style. To help develop this, at Lanercost, we try to provide as many opportunities as possible to write for purpose. We feel very strongly that children are most motivated and inspired when there is a reason and purpose to their work. Opportunities to write could include:

- Stories to share with family members or younger children in school
- Letters to Father Christmas, or as the children get older, letters to local authors or MPs
- Information leaflets about our local area to follow up on geography/history units
- Prayers and poems which are shared in collective worships
- Writing competitions for all ages (where appropriate)

The list of opportunities stretches far beyond those listed above, but they give you a snippet of how we motivate and engage both our struggling writers through to our strongest writers. Every writer is valued and every writer has their own voice which is waiting to be discovered.

Assessment of the Teaching and Learning of Writing

Writing is assessed continually within lessons. Teaching staff check in with children and give verbal feedback within lessons to develop the writing skills in the moment. These continual observations also help to inform the teaching each week and the necessary SPAG skills that are ready to be taught.

In addition to the daily monitoring that happens within lessons, children also complete at least one 'extended write' each half term. These are linked to the story/text focus which has been used throughout a given unit. We have a rolling program of genres to assess against and ensure that within each two-year rolling program, all children have the opportunity to learn about and write in a range of narrative and non-narrative styles.

When assessing a 'Big Write', we assess against a selection of criteria adapted for each year group. From this, we can then judge the quality of each piece of writing and whether each child is working below, within or above the national year group expectations. Our assessment criteria comes from the 'Grammarsaurus' writing assessment information.

We assess spelling separately with a baseline assessment at the start of each term and then mini-quizzes where needed between units. This information then informs any interventions which may be necessary.

At the end of EYFS, children are assessed against the Early learning goals. The writing and mark making produced throughout the year is used to inform these judgements. In Year 2 and Year 6, children take the statutory SATS tests for Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar, which happen in the summer term. Writing at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is based on teacher judgement and looks at the body of writing each child has produced, as a whole. This then informs our judgements which are moderated both within our staff team, with local schools and sometimes through the local authority.

The Impact of Teaching and Learning of Writing

Learning to write is a complex process and it is every child's entitlement. Taking possession of the written word can open up a world in which children can cultivate identity, an understanding of the world and their place in it in relation to others. To engage children in writing, they have to want to write, see the purpose in doing so and the opportunities it gives for them to have a voice. At Lanercost Primary School, we ensure that every child is given the opportunities listed above and thus leave their primary school education as enthusiastic and confident writers.

Although our teaching directly impacts each child during their time at Lanercost, we also have a vested interest in each child's continued education. We want to raise lifelong readers and writers- and in order to do this, we have to develop long term skills which can be transferred into wider aspects of each child's life. Our focus is very much on looking at each child as a whole and helping them to achieve what they want for themselves in the future. Being able to write with skill and proficiency offers a gateway into future education and into future possibilities.