

Thirsk Community Primary School's Approach to Writing in KS1

Familiarisation and Immersion

In Key Stage 1, children begin their writing journey by exploring a high-quality, age-appropriate text that links to the genre and purpose of writing. A **creative hook** is used to capture their imagination and curiosity, helping them feel excited about the story or topic. Teachers read the model text aloud, helping children become familiar with the **structure, characters, settings, and main events**. Through discussion and re-reading, pupils begin to understand how stories and texts work. They start to talk about the **language used by the author** and what effect it has.

Children learn to: **Read as a reader** – enjoying and understanding the story **Read as a writer** – noticing how it's written and what makes it effective

The **working wall** in the classroom shows important parts of the text, key vocabulary, and sentence types to support children's thinking and writing.

Planning for Writing

Children plan their ideas before writing by:

- Talking through what they want to write (oral rehearsal)
- Drawing pictures to represent parts of their story or ideas
- Acting out events or sequencing picture prompts
- Creating simple plans using sentence stems, vocabulary prompts, or labelled drawings

All planning is supported by the teacher through **modelling** and **shared talk**. The aim is to help children build confidence in forming and remembering what they want to write.

Editing and Improving

Children in KS1 are taught that editing means **checking and improving** their writing.

They learn to:

Re-read their writing to check it makes sense
Spot and correct missing capital letters or full stops
Add in missing words or improve vocabulary (e.g. changing "nice" to "happy" or "excited")
Use classroom tools (sound mats, word banks, phonics posters) to support their spelling

The editing process is introduced in small, supported steps:

Edit as you go – Re-reading each sentence after writing it to check it sounds right

Edit for improvement – With adult or peer support, improving words or sentence choices

Proofread – Spotting small errors like missing punctuation or tricky word spellings

In Year 1, much of this is done **orally** or with heavy adult guidance. In Year 2, children begin to edit short sections of their writing more independently.

Skills and Application

In KS1, there is a strong focus on **transcription** – helping children develop fluent handwriting, accurate spelling, and secure sentence structure.

Children are taught:

- **Phonics for spelling** – using the sounds they know to spell unfamiliar words
- **High-frequency words** – learning to spell common words that don't follow regular patterns
- **Letter formation and handwriting** – forming letters correctly and writing with increasing fluency
- **Sentence construction** – understanding what makes a complete sentence (capital letter, finger spaces, full stop)

In Year 1, the focus is on:

- Saying sentences aloud before writing
- Writing simple sentences using phonetical understanding
- Gaining control over spacing, sentence boundaries, and punctuation

In Year 2, children build on this by:

- Writing longer sentences using conjunctions (e.g. and, but, because)
- Beginning to use different types of sentences (statements, questions, commands)
- Spelling more words correctly using taught rules and patterns
- Forming letters and digits of the correct size and orientation

Skills are taught through short, focused activities that are always linked back to the class text or writing purpose. These may include sentence building, word sorting, phonics-based spelling tasks, or handwriting practice. Children are given regular opportunities to **apply** these skills in short bursts of writing.

Writing

Children write for a range of real purposes, such as writing stories, instructions, postcards, fact files, or simple letters.

They are taught to:

Say their sentence aloud before writing

Write it down using correct spelling and punctuation (as far as they are able)

Re-read their sentence to check it makes sense

The working wall and classroom environment provide prompts such as sentence starters, word banks, and phonics charts to support independence.

Where appropriate, success criteria are shared using pictures, symbols, or simple steps.

In KS1, we help children develop both the **mechanics of writing** (transcription) and a growing **understanding of how to be an author**. Writing tasks are purposeful, supported, and rooted in high-quality texts, with an increasing expectation for independence as children progress through Year 1 and Year 2.