

# ENGLISH-WRITING POLICY & SPELLING



*Scoil na mBuachaillí*

*(Clonakilty Boys National School)*



# Scoil na mBuachaillí, Cloich na Coillte

## AIMS / PURPOSES OF THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM

- a) To promote positive attitudes and develop an appreciation of the value of language, spoken, read and written.
- b) To create, foster and maintain the child's interest in expression and communication.
- c) To develop the child's ability to engage appropriately in listener/speaker relationships.
- d) To develop confidence and competence in listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- e) To develop cognitive ability and the capacity to clarify thinking through oral language, writing and reading.
- f) To enable the child to read and write independently.
- g) To enhance emotional, imaginative and aesthetic development through oral, reading and writing experiences.

*Taken from the 'New 'Curriculum Book pages 10 & 11*

- h) To ensure a balanced and broad curriculum.
- i) To ensure that writing is given a central place throughout the entire curriculum.
- j) To emphasise that the **process** of writing has intrinsic value in itself.
- k) To ensure that the children get experience of different types of writing.
- l) To help the children to become independent writers.
- m) To ensure that when the children are writing they draft, edit

	individual speech sounds
<b>Phonological awareness</b>	A range of skills such as the ability to analyse words into their constituent speech sounds, the ability to combine speech sounds, and the ability to detect rhyme and alliteration.
<b>Representational text</b>	Text in the form of diagrams, pictures, graphs etc
<b>Scanning</b>	Reading quickly in order to establish the organisation and principal features of a text
<b>Semantic cues</b>	The contextual information in a text that will help to predict a word or words
<b>Skimming</b>	Reading quickly in order to find the gist of a text
<b>Syntactic cues</b>	The information contained in grammar and language use that facilitates the interpretation of text
<b>syntax</b>	The totality of facts about the arrangement of words in a language
<b>Text</b>	The entirety of a linguistic communication in written or printed form or through sign, gesture or situation
<b>Writing genres</b>	The various forms appropriate to different types of written communication - story, essay, letter, dialogue, recipe etc.

<b>Digraph</b>	A combination of two letters used to represent a single sound.
<b>Engagement with text</b>	Reading, comprehending, reflecting on and responding to a piece of text.
<b>Expository text</b>	Text that describes or explains
<b>Grammar</b>	The abstract system of rules in terms of which a person's mastery of a language can be explained
<b>Grapho/phonetic cues</b>	The information provided in sounds and in combinations of sounds represented by letters and groups of letters that helps to predict words
<b>Language-experience material</b>	The creation of text by the teacher in collaboration with the pupils in order to facilitate early reading
<b>Large-format books</b>	Books that are produced in a format large enough for collaborative reading with groups
<b>Literacy</b>	The ability to read and write
<b>Morpheme</b>	A speech element having a meaning or grammatical function that cannot be subdivided into further such elements
<b>Narrative text</b>	An account of events, experiences
<b>Onset and Rime</b>	<b>Onset</b> is the part of a syllable that precedes the vowel and the <b>rime</b> is the remainder of the syllable.
<b>Phoneme</b>	One of the set of speech sounds in a language that serve to distinguish one word from another.
<b>Phonemic awareness</b>	The knowledge that words are composed of

## GLOSSARY

- and redraft.
- n) It is hoped that this policy will reinforce our Handwriting Policy.
  - o) To make use of our IT facilities especially when drafting, editing and redrafting work and then to use the computer to enhance the final product.

## PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES

### Junior and Senior Infants

#### Strand 1: Receptiveness to Language

#### Strand Unit: Writing: Creating and fostering the impulse to write.

*The child should be enabled to*

- Experience and enjoy a print-rich environment.
- Receive help from the teacher, who will sometimes act as a scribe to assist with accuracy and presentation.
- Write and draw frequently
  - *Scribbling, making attempts at writing, letters and symbols, captions, words and sentences.*
- Write for different audiences
  - *Oneself, teacher, other children, family, visitors*
- See personal writing displayed
  - *On worksheets*
  - *As part of arts activities*
  - *On a writing shelf or in a writing corner*
  - *In class-made collections*
  - *In the School Christmas Annual*
- Read personal writing aloud and hear it read.

## **Strand 2: Competence and Confidence in using language**

### **Strand Unit: Writing: developing competence, confidence and the ability to write independently**

*The child should be enabled to*

- Learn to form and name individual letters using various materials
  - *Plasticine, sand, soft letters, magnetic letters, writing instruments*
- Write and draw
  - *Scribbles, shapes, signs, letters, numerals*
- Understand the left-right, top-bottom orientation of writing.
- Develop a satisfactory grip of writing implements.
- Copy words from signs in the environment.
- Copy letters and words informally as part of class activities.
- Write his name.
- Use labels to name familiar people and things.
- Write letters and words from memory.
- Become aware of lower-case and capital letters and the full stop.
- Develop the confidence to use approximate spelling.
- Begin to develop conventional spelling of simple words.
- See the teacher model writing as an enjoyable experience.
- Choose subjects for drawing and writing.
- Choose the form of expression he finds appropriate
  - *Scribbles, shapes, pictures, letters, words.*

## **Strand 3: Developing cognitive abilities through language**

### **Strand Unit: Writing: clarifying thought through writing**

*The child should be enabled to*

- Draw a picture and write about it

## **MONITORING/EVALUATION/REVIEW**

The following assessment tools will be used in English, however it is neither desirable nor practicable that all these tools be used in every learning situation or within a particular time span:

- Teacher observation
- Teacher-designed tasks and tests
- Work samples, portfolios and projects
- Curriculum Profiles
- Diagnostic Tests
- Standardised tests

The primary aim of all assessment is to enhance the learning experiences of the child, and it will be important that the assessment techniques employed are worthwhile and do not detract from teaching time.

A record of pupils work will be kept - e.g. records of their reading and their responses to it etc where appropriate and worthwhile. Teachers will keep their own records on the children's progress. Reporting to parents on children will be carried out as usual through Parent/Teacher Meetings and Reports.

This policy will be reviewed at intervals to assess its effectiveness.

*April 2002*

*Glossary of terms on following pages.*

- There will be a review at the end of each term - at this review, the issue of withdrawing children from the service will be discussed. Children will be withdrawn using the following criteria - standardised test results, discretion of the principal, class teacher and learning support teacher.
- Parents will **always** be consulted when a child enters or leaves the service.
- If parents refuse to give permission a written note must be obtained.

#### CLASSROOM PLANNING FOR ENGLISH

When planning the English Curriculum the teacher will take account of the integrated nature of the curriculum i.e. in terms of the 4 strands -

- Receptiveness to language
- Competence and confidence in using language
- Developing Cognitive abilities through language
- Emotional and Imaginative development through language.

Planning for writing in the classroom will involve the following:

- Stressing the importance of the process is every bit as important as well as the product.
- Flexibility is very important in
  - *The variety of topic and genre*
  - *The range of audience*
  - *Greater autonomy for the children in choosing the topics of their writing*
  - *The way that time is allocated to writing*
  - *The manner in which the writing is presented.*
  - *The materials on which the children write.*

- *A name, a caption, a sentence*
- Draw and write about everyday experience or about something just learned
  - *Pictures and scribbles*
- Write naming words and add descriptive words.
- Rewrite sentences to make the message clearer.

#### **Strand 4: Emotional and imaginative development through language**

##### **Strand Unit: Reading: Responding to text**

*The child should be enabled to*

- Draw and write about feelings
  - *Happiness, sadness, love, fear.*
- Draw and write about things he likes and dislikes
- Draw and write about sensory experiences
  - *Hot, cold, bright, dark, sweet*
- Draw and write stories
- Hear a rich variety of stories, rhymes and songs and draw and write about them.
- Use mime and role-playing to create imaginary situations and then draw and write about them.

#### **First and Second Classes**

##### **Strand 1: Receptiveness to Language**

##### **Strand Unit: Creating: creating and fostering the impulse to write**

*The child should be enabled to*

- Experience a classroom environment that encourages writing

- *Personal writing collections*
- *Class library*
- *Writing corner*
- *Displays of writing*
- Observe the teacher as he/she models writing stories
- Seek help from the teacher in order to achieve accuracy and an appropriate standard presentation.
- Experience how a story structure is organised by reading and listening to fiction.
- Write regularly for different audiences
  - *Personal purposes*
  - *The teacher*
  - *Other children*
  - *The family*
- Choose topics to write about.
- Explore different genres
  - *A story*
  - *An invitation*
  - *A letter*
- Work with other children when writing.
- Have writing valued
  - *Hearing it praised*
  - *Having it displayed*
  - *Sharing it with others*
  - *Christmas Annual*

## **Strand 2: Competence and Confidence in using language**

### **Strand Unit: Writing: developing competence, confidence and the ability to write independently**

*The child should be enabled to*

- Experience an abundance of oral language activity when

- Talking to the child, hearing the child talk.
- Reading stories aloud or telling stories to the child.
- Encouraging the child to read.
- Paired reading activities.
- Examining spellings and encouraging the Look, cover, write and say approach.
- Keeping an eye on the presentation of his homework.
- Encouraging children to write.

## **EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND REMEDIATION OF READING DIFFICULTIES**

Children in Senior Infants are identified by the class teacher if they are experiencing difficulty with reading and then if appropriate the children are then taken by the **Learning Support Teacher**. No formal assessment is carried out in Junior Infants or Senior Infants by the class teacher.

Formal assessment begins in Rang 1. All the children in Rang 1 - Rang 6 are assessed in October each year using the **Micra-T** test. The results of all tests are kept by the teacher, Learning Support Teacher and in the class file (kept in the office).

- The children will be withdrawn for Learning Support teaching.
- In order to minimise the disruption to the rest of the class organisation and with the child's own engagement with the rest of the curriculum there will be greater liaison between class teacher and Learning Support Teacher.
- Remediation be done in groups of 4/5.
- In order to evaluate the school's system of remediation there will be regular meetings with class teachers (at least once a term), learning support teacher and principal (once a month) .
- When appropriate the Learning Support Teacher could take the body of the class occasionally, while the class teacher works with the group of children with reading difficulties.
- Parents will be encouraged to support the work of the Learning Support Teacher at home.

- *Checking to see if the last attempt is right. (These last four steps - **Look, cover, write and say (sometimes called - Look, cover, write and check** are also used when learning spellings.)*
- By the time the children reach the senior classes, they should have begun to master the common spelling rules for example:
  - *Delete an 'e' at the end of a word before adding 'ing'.*
  - *Most plurals are formed by adding 's'.*
  - *'q' is always followed by 'u'.*
- During the writing process the teacher will constantly refer to these and other spelling rules and the exceptions that may arise.
- Spellings will also be examined orally.

## RESOURCES/IMPLICATIONS

### INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

- Computers are a major contributor to a print-rich environment. Using programmes inevitably involves reading on-screen instructions etc. Children's use of computers will therefore foster their awareness of print and encourage the development of reading skills.
- Computer programmes - needed to support the development of word identification, spelling and other reading skills.
- Encyclopaedias and reference books are now available in multi-media format.
- Word processing packages.
- Desk top publishing packages to enhance the presentation of the child's work.
- Connectivity to the internet and email.
- Use of multimedia authoring packages such as Hyperstudio and Opus Pro.

### ROLE OF PARENTS

Parents have a crucial role to play in the child's language development.

- preparing a writing task.
- Realise that first attempts at writing are not necessarily the finished product and learn to undertake second drafts in order to improve writing.
- Understand that the conventions of punctuation help to make meaning clearer in writing -
  - *Full stops, capital letters*
- Spell words in a recognisable way based on an awareness of the most common spelling strings and patterns
  - *Simple words with short vowel rimes: dog, mill, rock*
  - *Simple words with regular patterns: street, came, float*
  - *Two-syllable words with regular patterns: robber, happen*
  - *Words with common prefixes and suffixes: display, wonderful*
- Use approximate spelling as an interim measure in mastering the conventions of spelling.
- Spell correctly a range of familiar, important and regularly occurring words and use a variety of sources as aids to spelling
  - *Words displayed in class*
  - *Words compiled in personal dictionaries*
  - *Words learned in reading.*
- Choose topics for writing after conferring with the teacher.
- Have regular opportunities to write for himself and for others.
- Decide whether or not to re-draft a piece of writing.
- Confer with the teacher and others on the quality of presentation.
- Write notes and messages to different audiences
  - *Teacher*
  - *Friends*
  - *Parents*

### **Strand 3: Developing cognitive abilities through language**

#### **Strand Unit: Writing: clarifying thought through writing**

*The child should be enabled to*

- Write in a variety of genres
  - *Stories, diaries, poetry, charts, lists, captions, cards, invitations, simple letters.*
  - Write a version of a story told by the teacher.
  - Write about something that has been learned.
  - Write the significant details about an event or an activity
    - *A game I played*
    - *My birthday*
- Write an explanation for something.
- Re-read work, confer with the teacher or others about it, and then rewrite it.
- Write a simple sentence and add words to extend its meaning.
- Listen to a story and write down questions to ask about it.
- Write answers to questions asked by the teacher.

#### **Strand 4: Emotional and imaginative development through language**

#### **Strand Unit: Writing: developing emotional and imaginative life through writing**

*The child should be enabled to*

- Express feelings in writing
  - *Happiness*
  - *Sadness*
  - *Excitement*
  - *Pride*
  - *Anticipation*
- Write about experiences
  - *Enjoyable*
  - *Funny*
  - *Annoying*

terns such as “ee” or “ai” the same activities can be used with words containing long vowel rimes and rimes with silent lettersj

- *-ean: clean, mean*
- *-ore: more, store*

#### **Using meaning**

- At the meaning stage of the developmental process children are beginning to use their knowledge of particular characteristics in the spelling of nouns, verbs and adjectives, for example, in their spelling of polysyllabic words. Word study at this stage focuses on roots and prefixes and on examining words according to parts of speech:
  - *-or: author, conductor, sculptor*
  - *-ate: educate, decorate, separate*
  - *-al: topical, dental, musical*

#### **Teaching spelling strategies**

Progress in spelling takes place when children experience a consistent and systematic approach to its teaching. They need to master strategies for learning new words which ensure that they don't rely totally on spelling out words letter by letter. Their attention needs to be directed to the whole word with the intention of reproducing it.

#### **Predict - say - look - cover - write - check**

One useful strategy for learning spelling is to follow the process Predict - say - look - cover - write - check

- Children's attempts at spelling should be mainly in written form. When engaged in writing they will be attempting to spell words. They should predict what the spelling might be and then say the word as they write their attempt. At the conferencing stage the teacher will correct or normalise a misspelling.
- When rewriting, the child will follow the process of
  - *Looking at the correct spelling of a misspelt word.*
  - *Covering it or turning it face down.*
  - *Writing it.*

- *Compiling personal dictionaries*
- *Using dictionaries and thesauruses*
- *Using strategies such as predict, look, say, cover, write and check*
- *Becoming familiar with common spelling rules.*
- *Spelling will be given as homework.*
- *Spelling Tests will be given in all classes.*

### **Developmental stages in mastering spelling**

- The stages are
  - *Using sound-letter relationships*
  - *Using pattern*
  - *Using meaning.*
- Direct instruction in spelling should be undertaken in the context of reading and writing and should be guided by information derived from the children's approximate spelling.

### **Using Sound**

- Picture sorting
  - *Here the children categorise words according to rhyming word families, starting with short vowel sounds -  
Van, man, can  
Dog, log, frog*
- Word Sorting
  - *At the word sorting stage, children sort written words according to short vowel rimes  
-ug : plug, slug, mug  
-ack: track, back, black*
- Word hunting
  - *Word hunting requires children to list words from their reading according to short vowel rimes.*

### **Using Patterns**

- At the second stage when children are beginning to use vowel pat-

- *Frightening*
- Listen to the experiences of others and express reactions to them in writing.
- Draw and write about sensory experience
  - *Sight*
  - *Hearing*
  - *Taste*
  - *Touch*
  - *Smell*
- Write about feelings experienced in drama activities.
- Draw and write stories and poems.
- Express in writing likes and dislikes about events and characters in stories and poems.
- Listen to music and write about it.

### **Third and Fourth Classes**

#### **Strand 1: Receptiveness to Language**

#### **Strand Unit: Writing: creating and fostering the impulse to write**

*The child should be enabled to*

- Experience a classroom environment that encourages writing
  - *Class library*
  - *Writing corner*
  - *Displays of writing*
  - *Anthologies of his and other's writing*
  - *Captioned drawings*
  - *Posters*
  - *Copies of Christmas Annuals*
- Observe the teacher modelling different writing genres
  - *Writing about a personal experience*
  - *Writing a letter*

- *Writing a description*
- Use personal reading as a stimulus to writing.
- Write stories that explore a variety of genres.
- Re-read his writing for pleasure.
- Choose the audience for which to write.
- Choose both the subject and form of his writing.
- Receive and give positive responses to writing.
- See his writing valued.
  - *Constructive comment*
  - *Having it displayed.*
  - *Having it included in class anthologies/Christmas Annual*
  - *Reading it aloud.*

## **Strand 2: Competence and Confidence in using language**

### **Strand Unit: Writing: developing competence, confidence and the ability to write independently**

*The child should be enabled to*

- Write regularly, and gradually extend the period over which a writing effort is sustained.
- Engage with the writing of one piece over a period
  - *A week, a number of weeks, a term*
- Experience varied and consistent oral language activity as a preparation for writing.
- Learn to use questions as a mechanism for expanding and developing a story
  - *Who? Where? When? Why? What? How? What if?*
- Give sequence to ideas and events in stories.
- Develop an appreciation of how the intended audience should influence the nature of a piece of writing
  - *A birthday invitation*
  - *A letter seeking information for a project*
- Develop an awareness of the difference between written language

work as far as possible.

- He will get better at this aspect if he has had a lot of experience of conferencing with the teacher and re-drafting.

### **Publishing**

- The final version of the writing should be in the child's best handwriting or it may be typed.
- The writing could kept in a book of the class's writing or it could be displayed.
- At this stage, it may also be illustrated by drawing or using computer software.
- The writing may also be placed in the class library.
- The writing may also be shared with other classes.

### **Grammar and punctuation**

- Grammar will be taught both formally and informally.
- By the end of the senior classes children should be able to name the principal parts of speech and their more common properties, and to be aware of their functions.

### **SPELLING**

We are using the **Fallons Spelling Book** throughout the school from Rang 1 to Rang 6.

### **A multi-dimensional approach**

- A multi-dimensional approach would include
  - *Accepting approximate spelling*
  - *Linking spelling with the development of phonological and phonemic awareness*
  - *Linking it with onset and rime*
  - *Building up a bank of commonly used words*
  - *Having a rich experience of environmental print*

tween teacher and child can follow. This can

- *Give the child the opportunity to ask questions and seek advice.*
- *Give him the opportunity to talk over ideas with the teacher.*
- *Give the teacher the opportunity to prompt the child to a more detailed, expressive use of language (“Can you write that sentence in a different way?”, “Can you tell me more about the bird.”)*
- A child may also read his writing to a child or become part of a small group that provides feedback to each other. The groups should be structured so that the children get positive comment as well as suggestions for improving their writing.
- Children could keep their work in a folder and add to it on a daily basis. This folder would then become a portfolio of their work.
- Based on the feedback to his writing the writer can then return to the first draft and proceed to polish it by
  - *Adding to it*
  - *Deleting from it*
  - *Reordering it*
  - *Rewording parts of it.*
- The amount of revision will depend on the age and sophistication of the writer.
- Once this revision is complete a further conferencing session can then take place. At this point the child should be led towards a consideration of the level of presentation the writing might require. Issues such as:
  - *Grammar,*
  - *Punctuation,*
  - *Spelling,*
  - *Handwriting and*
  - *General neatness will be covered.*
- A final draft could then be prepared.

### **Encouraging self-correction**

- It is important that the child will be led to self-correct his own

and oral language.

- Learn to revise and re-draft writing
  - *Reading it over*
  - *Conferring and discussing with the teacher*
  - *Conferring and discussing with others in the class*
- Learn to use a wider range of punctuation marks with greater accuracy as part of the revision and editing process.
- Learn to write with increasing grammatical accuracy through the process of revision and editing.
- Use a range of aids and strategies, including the use of approximate spelling, to improve his command of spelling
  - *Dictionaries, word lists, word searches, spelling checkers, anagrams, regular word patterns*
- Write in legible joined script with confidence and fluency.
- Develop his ability to write using information technology
  - *Word processing*
  - *Multi-media authoring*
- Regularly select his own topics for writing.
- Choose to write for himself only.
- Decide, after conferring with the teacher and others, who the audience for a piece of writing should be.
- Decide on the quality of presentation in relation to the purpose and audience of a piece writing.
- Co-operate in writing a record of class activities
  - *A single topic*
  - *A theme*
  - *A timetable*

### **Strand 3: Developing cognitive abilities through language**

#### **Strand Unit: Writing: clarifying thought through writing**

*The child should be enabled to*

- Write in a variety of genres with greater sophistication

- *Stories*
  - *Diaries*
  - *Records of what has been learned*
  - *Reports*
  - *Letters*
  - *Notices*
  - *Menus*
  - *Lists*
- Read a story and write it in his own words.
  - Read a narrative or expository piece and summarise it.
  - Write about an idea to explain it to someone else.
  - Write about why he finds an ideas attractive.
  - Write about ideas encountered in other areas of the curriculum.
  - Write down directions on how to perform a particular topic and prioritise them.
  - Write a sentence and elaborate it by adding one or more ideas to it.
  - Expand and clarify his thoughts on a particular idea or topic through drafting and re-drafting.

#### **Strand 4: Emotional and imaginative development through language**

#### **Strand Unit: Writing: developing emotional and imaginative life through writing**

*The child should be enabled to*

- Express his reactions to particular experiences in writing.
- Write about experiences and feelings in diary form.
- Write about feelings experienced in improvisational drama.
- Create stories and poems.
- Write extended stories in book form.
- Write about favourite moments, characters and events in stories.
- Express in writing his reactions to poetry.
- Express in writing his reactions to reading.

- *Descriptions*
- *Explanations*
- *Argument*
- *Letters*
- *Notes*
- *Diaries*
- *Recipes*
- *Writing in other curricular areas*
- *Records of learning*
- *Reactions to reading*
- *Complete books*

#### **DRAFTING, EDITING, REDRAFTING**

Drafting, editing and redrafting lies at the heart of the approach to writing contained in the curriculum. It can

- Reinforce children's ownership of their writing.
- Help to develop their expressive and communicative abilities.
- Help children improve their writing skills through self-correction.
- Give them responsibility for their own writing efforts.
- Provide the means through which they can come to control the conventions of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Lead them to become independent writers.

#### **Writing the first draft**

When writing the first draft children should

- Write as much as possible and not discard any ideas.
- Presentation, spelling and handwriting will be attend to later.

In this way children will realise that what they have to say is valued and that the primary function of writing is to communicate.

#### **Revising**

##### ***Discussion between teacher and child.***

- After a child has made a first draft a process of discussion be-

- *Various facets of a topic*
- *Why the topic is chosen*
- *The language that might be used - words, phrases, expressions peculiar to the topic.*
- *The type of format required by the genre in which the piece is written.*

### **Audience and purpose**

It is important that children write for a real audience and a real purpose. This will often be decided by the topic itself - for example a diary or a letter. Before beginning a piece of writing it is also important to establish a sense of purpose for the writing.

The audience for their writing will grow as the children mature - at first they write mainly for themselves, for the teacher and for their parents, but the audience will include other adults, other children, relations, pen pals, institutions, firms etc.

### **Registers of language**

As the child grows he will come to realise that different registers of language are needed for different purposes and audiences, for example - the register of language required for a birthday card would be quite distinct from what would be used in a letter to firm seeking information for a project.

### **Writing genres**

The genres in which children write will also vary. As with the audience, the range of this will expand as they grow older. This is important in a number of ways:

- Different purposes and audiences require different genres - a story, a recipe, a telephone message, a poem, a letter.
- Children's writing should reflect the real purposes of written expression.
- If writing ability is to be developed properly children need to have the experience of using language in different ways.
- Listed below are the most obvious genres that the children will experience:
  - *Stories*

- Express in writing his reactions to personal reading.
- Use his own artwork and that of others as a stimulus to writing.

## **Fifth and Sixth Classes**

### **Strand 1: Receptiveness to Language**

#### **Strand Unit: Writing: creating and fostering the impulse to write**

*The child should be enabled to*

- Experience a classroom environment that encourages writing
  - *Class library*
  - *Writing corner*
  - *Displays of writing for visitors*
  - *Anthologies of his writing*
  - *Anthologies of the writing of others*
  - *Books written by him and others*
  - *Captioned charts, pictures and posters*
- Observe the teacher model a wide variety of writing genres
  - *Narrative*
  - *Expository*
  - *Letters*
  - *Poems*
  - *Project work*
  - *Fiction*
- Express and communicate reactions to reading experiences.
- Experience interesting and relevant writing challenges.
- Write for an increasingly varied audience.
- Receive and give constructive responses to writing.
- See his writing valued
  - *Christmas Annual*
  - *Class anthologies*
  - *Displays of personal writing*

- *Printed examples of writing*
- *Writing exhibitions*
- Experience a level of success in writing that will be an incentive to continue writing.

## **Strand 2: Competence and Confidence in using language**

### **Strand Unit: Writing: developing competence, confidence and the ability to write independently**

*The child should be enabled to*

- Write regularly on chosen topics.
- Write for a sustained length of time.
- Engage in the writing on one piece over a period
  - *A week, a number of weeks, a term*
- Experience varied and consistent oral language activity as part of the pre-writing process.
- Observe the teacher improving writing
  - *Drafting, Revising, Editing*
- Write independently through a process of drafting, revising, editing and publishing.
- Write, without re-drafting, on a given or chosen topic within certain time constraints.
- Observe the conventions of grammar, punctuation and spelling in his writing.
- Use dictionaries and thesauruses to extend and develop vocabulary and spelling.
- Explore the possibilities of syntax and sentence structure in reading and writing.
- Choose a register of language appropriate to subject and audience
  - *Writing to a friend*
  - *Writing for a display*
  - *Writing to seek information*
- Choose a form and quality of presentation appropriate to the audience.

stored in individual folders) etc may be used.

## **FOSTERING THE PROCESS OF WRITING**

### **Selecting topics for writing**

- The range of topics that a child writes about should be broad and he should have a degree of autonomy in choosing them.
- The topics that children about should arise from the
  - *reality of their lives or*
  - *imagined experiences and should reflect their concerns and interests.*
- Children could be encouraged to list topics that they would like to write about drawn from for example - hobbies, friends, parties, trips, television programmes and children's literature. Sources of topics for children's writing might include
  - *Personal concerns*
  - *Everyday experiences*
  - *Life at home and in school*
  - *Stories*
  - *Social needs e.g. a letter, a note*
  - *Personal reading*
  - *Topics arising from other areas of the curriculum*
  - *Poetry*
  - *Drama*
- Occasionally some children will have a difficulty in choosing a topic or in advancing a piece of writing they may have started. The following strategies may be used in these situations:
  - *Brainstorming*
  - *Webbing (children may test out ideas using a web or map)*
  - *Research*

### **The importance of oral work**

- Assignments in writing should generally be preceded by extensive oral language activity. This may take place in whole class, group, teacher-pupil or pupil-pupil contexts.
- Oral discussion can explore

The positive elements of the child's writing will be highlighted and improvements will be suggested.

- Children's writing can be valued in a number of ways -
  - *Having it read aloud*
  - *Seeing it displayed*
  - *Having it included in the library corner or classroom library*
  - *Having it published in the Christmas Annual*
  - *Taking it home and reading it to parents.*
- Children will be allowed where and when appropriate to choose their own topics, the purposes for which they write, the audience for which it is intended and the form of expression they give it.

### EARLY WRITING

In infant classes the definition of writing will be broad enough to include any graphic representation the child attempts - lines, scribbles, drawings etc - and the distinction between this and art activity will be very blurred. Gradually, however the child's ability to use letters and words will evolve.

- This can be stimulated and developed through
  - *The experience of a rich print environment - characterised by the use of words and phrases as labels or signs that are changed regularly.*
  - *The teacher modelling writing for the children.*
  - *The experience of early reading.*
  - *Copying letters and words from the blackboard and the environment.*
  - *Learning to write his name.*
- Even when children have begun to write words they still often use them merely as a caption on a picture or a comment.
- The formation of letters will form part of the child's writing development. Teaching this will be done as one of a number of activities that a child must practice in order to begin writing.
- However the bulk of time will be devoted to expression and communication.
- Flexibility of materials is important to the success of the new approach - for example - copybooks, separate sheets (which could be

- Help others in co-operative writing activities
  - *Projects*
  - *Writing and publishing a class newspaper/Christmas Annual*
  - *Writing and publishing compilations of stories and poetry*
- Write fluently and relevantly in other areas of the curriculum.
- Develop a legible, fluent, personal style of handwriting.
- Develop skills in the use of information technology and multi-media authoring.

### **Strand 3: Developing cognitive abilities through language**

#### **Strand Unit: Writing: clarifying thought through writing**

*The child should be enabled to*

- Write in a variety of genres
  - *Narrative prose*
  - *Poetry*
  - *Instructions*
  - *Diaries*
  - *Learning logs*
  - *Reports*
  - *Letters*
  - *Summaries*
  - *Forms*
  - *Recipes*
- Examine the characteristics that differentiate written and oral language.
- Write for a particular purpose and with a particular audience in mind.
- Reflect on and analyse ideas through writing.
- Refine ideas and their expression through drafting and re-drafting.
- Express and communicate new learning.
- Relate new ideas to previous learning.
- Use notes to summarise reading material and write an account from

- the notes.
- Sketch an ordered summary of ideas and draft a writing assignment based on it.
  - Argue the case in writing for a particular point of view.
  - Argue the cases in writing for a point of view with which he disagrees.
  - Explore the use of compound and complex sentences in expressing thought.

#### **Strand 4: Emotional and imaginative development through language**

##### **Strand Unit: Writing: developing emotional and imaginative life through writing**

*The child should be enabled to*

- Analyse in writing his reactions to personal experiences.
- Express in writing reactions to the experience of others.
- Write stories and poems.
- Write longer stories or a series of related stories in book form.
- Keep a personal diary.
- Express a personal reaction to ideas, emotions and images encountered in literature.
- Express and analyse his reactions to poems.
- Analyse different interpretations of poems in writing.
- Write about the relationship between poems and personal experience.
- Write short plays based on activity in improvisational drama.
- Express in writing reactions to music, artwork, films, television programmes and videos.

## **APPROACHES**

### **THE PROCESS OF WRITING**

Children learn to write through the process of writing. The skill of formalising thoughts on paper needs to be learned. The approach to writing incorporates a number of significant principles:

- The process of writing is every bit as important as the product because, it is through consistent practice in using that process that children learn to write.
- Children will write for different audiences, on a wide range of topics, and in a variety of genres.
- Children will have a significant amount of control over the subject of their writing and the audience for which it is written.
- Children will experience drafting, editing and redrafting a piece of writing.
- The teacher will act as mentor and guide in this process of drafting, editing and redrafting, helping children to develop expressive abilities and accuracy.
- Through this interactive process children will gradually develop the ability to self-correct their writing and so become independent writers.

#### **The guidance of the teacher**

- The teacher's guidance is of course essential in helping the child to
  - *Choose topics*
  - *Choose the genre in which to write*
  - *Improve the quality of expression*
  - *Elaborate on what he says*
  - *Add new ideas*
  - *Use the conventions of grammar, punctuation and spelling*
  - *Achieve an acceptable level of overall presentation*

#### **Value children's writing**

- Children's writing should be praised, receive constructive criticism and see their efforts valued in order to enhance their confidence in using it as a means of communication.
- The teacher's approach to individual children's writing will be positive.