

Progression in Writing

Guidance for Teachers

Highfield Schools

The following guidance aims to provide a consistent approach to the teaching of early mark making and writing. It is a tool to demonstrate progression through the subject area to inform teachers of next steps in teaching and learning.

The main aims of the writing progression guidance are to:

- Create love and enthusiasm for writing
- Develop a deeper understanding of the technicalities of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Improve pupils' ability to communicate in written forms
- Ensure a consistent approach within schools
- Support Medium Term planning at Highfield Schools

Handwriting

The evolution of efficient and communicative handwriting depends largely on the development of specific fine and gross motor skills. Students learn to carry out precise movements such as pinching and gripping in a coordinated manner in order to form a firm and efficient pencil grip. We cannot expect them to be able to write if they haven't yet developed the strength needed in their hands and fingers.

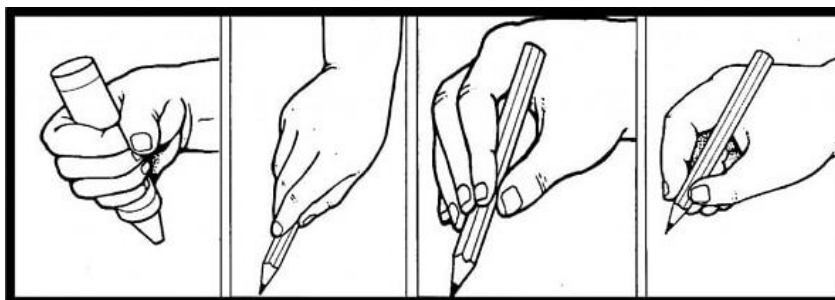
Fine Motor Activities to Develop Pre Writing Skills

To progress to using mark making implements and coordination pupils need to develop strength and coordination in their movements. This can be achieved by:

- Threading, posting and slotting
- Weaving
- Manipulating small objects
- Squeezing (such as playdough etc)
- Poking
- Finger Painting
- Building Models

Early learning

Students should be encouraged to mark make using a variety of different materials and implements. This will gradually move on to students mark making with a purpose. The aim is for pupils to develop a firm and efficient pencil grip in order for writing to be less tiresome, fluent and efficient. The diagram below illustrates the common progression and development in pencil grip as age progresses. It must be noted however that not all students (particularly with SEN) develop at these rates. Some pencil grips can be modified from the norm but still be efficient and effective.



1-1 ½
years
cylindrical
grasp

2-3 years
digital
grasp

3 ½ - 4
years
modified
tripod
grasp (H1)

4 ½ - 7
years
tripod
grasp (H4)

Once a firm and efficient pencil grasp is developed students develop writing skills and make marks for a purpose. This emerges from pictures and meaningful marks into writing and translation of environmental print.

In this initial stages writing manifests itself in drawings and pictures:

Drawing - Drawings represent writing



Scribbling – Marks or scribbles the child
Intends to be writing



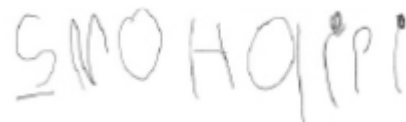
Wavy scribbles or mock handwriting –
Wavy scribbles that imitate cursive writing
and have a left to right progression



Letter like forms or mock letters – marks that
resemble letter like shapes



Letter strings – strings of letters that do not
create words including upper case and lower
case letters (H1)



Transitional writing – Letters with spaces in
between to resemble words, copying from
environmental print, letters often reversed (H2)



Invented or phonetic spelling – different ways
to represent the sounds in words, initial or final
sounds representing the entire word (H3)



Beginning word or phrase writing – beginning,
middle and ending sounds, short phrases (H4)



Conventional spelling and sentence writing



As the mechanics of writing develop progression focusses on phonic attempts at words, composition and effect. Students will also learn to form letters correctly in a pre-cursive and cursive manner whichever is efficient for them. Letters fall into groups or 'families' according to the orientation needed to form the letter (H5 moving to H6 with clear ascenders and descenders such as letters like y, f, d, j).



Long letters – long sweeping action from top to bottom. l i j t u y

Curly letters – all formed from the initial 'c' shape c a o q g d e s f

Zig Zag letters – formed from lines x z v w

One arm letters – up and over r b n h m k p

Once efficient formation is achieved students will begin to use a pre-cursive style to facilitate joining with diagonal and horizontal strokes (H9).

Phonics, Reading & Spelling

Our approach to reading and phonics is progressive ensuring a consistent approach across classes and Pathways. Please see our reading strategies booklet that details the procedures and techniques used in order to teach phonics and reading in a systematic way.

As a school we follow the Read, Write, Inc. program to ensure this.

Grammar and Punctuation

Grammar is about teaching students to think from creative angles. It's about having the ability to organize words, phrases, and sentences for maximum communication power within their writing. If students don't know grammar, they don't know what's possible with the English language.

Punctuation marks enable us to define the status of the sentences **we** write. Through its use **we can** indicate whether a sentence is a question, a statement, or direct speech, and whether a speaker is exclaiming. **Punctuation** also enables us to separate parts of language such as phrases, clauses and sentences to make them understandable to the reader.

Vocabulary & Grammar Progression

Initially pupils use words, symbols, pictures and phrases in order to communicate a meaning or idea (H2-3). For example:

Mum shop

This could be translated as 'My Mum went to the shop'.

As students develop their use of known vocabulary to them and begin to apply this they begin to use appropriate vocabulary to convey meaning into sentences:

'My Mum went to the shop in the sun'.

Here students begin to construct short sentences, sometimes with support from an adult which is predominantly orally or via their own method of communication (H3) then beginning to translate this into writing (H4).

Conjunctions

Two ideas or clauses in a sentence are beginning to be joined together with words such as 'and'. A conjunction is the glue that holds two phrases or clauses together (H5).

CONJUNCTION	EXAMPLE
For	We listened eagerly, for he brought news of our families.
And	She didn't speak to anyone, and nobody spoke to her.

At this stage pupils will also begin to use simple description and have an awareness of adjectives in their writing (H5).

Initially pupils will be using simple conjunctions such as

and who but until

Nouns

A noun is a naming word, a person, place or thing.(H7)

Beach, Charlie a Diamond Ring

Pronouns

Pronouns take the place of nouns in a sentence. For example:

Charlie ate the pie – Charlie is the noun

He ate the pie – He is the pronoun

Adjectives

Students will be taught simple adjectives to describe. They will use them in the correct context in sentences and be able to recognise them in sentences. (H7)

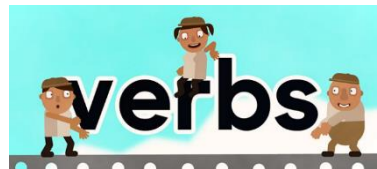
The **little red** hen walked on the path.

Verbs

A verb is a word used to describe an action, state or occurrence.(H8)

Verbs can be used to describe an action, that's doing something. For example, like the word 'jumping' in this sentence:

The rabbit was jumping in the field.



Prepositions

A preposition describes where (H10) – this writing is under the picture. Other examples include:

inside

outside

towards

across

Adverbs

An adverb is simply a word that describes a verb (an action or a doing word) (H9/H10/H12)

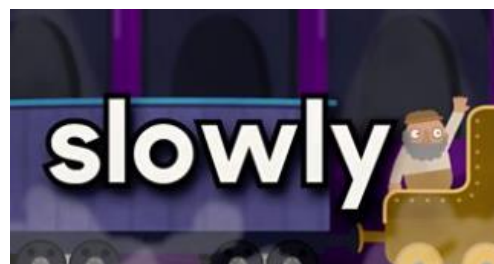
- He ate his breakfast **quickly**.

The word '**quickly**' is an adverb as it tells us how he ate (the verb) his breakfast.

Where to place adverbs?

Adverbs can come before or after a verb.

- He '**quickly**' ate his lunch.
- He ate his lunch '**quickly**'.



Past Tense

The past tense expresses something that happened in the past. Commonly you add 'ed' to the word (H9). There are different types as illustrated below:

Past simple	I walked
Past continuous	I was walking
Past perfect	I had walked
Past continuous perfect	I had been walking

Present Tense

This describes something happening in the here and now eg The bus is too far away.

Subordinate Clauses

A subordinate clause is a clause that cannot stand alone as a complete sentence but is linked to the main clause using a [subordinating conjunction](#). It does not express a complete thought and requires additional information if read on its own.

For example, in the sentence 'I played out until it went dark', 'until it went dark' is the subordinate clause as it requires additional information in order to make sense. Subordinate clauses contain a subject [noun](#) and a [verb](#). (H12)

Fronted Adverbials

Fronted adverbials **Adverbials** are words or phrases that give more information to the sentence.(H13)

"I discovered fronted adverbials, earlier today."

'Earlier today' is the adverbial.

"Earlier today, I discovered fronted adverbials."

A fronted adverbial is when the adverbial word or phrase is moved to the front of the sentence, before the verb. So here, 'earlier today' is a fronted adverbial.

Language can also be used to create effect:

Similes – comparing one thing to another

He is as **'brave as a lion'** - as ____ as a _____

Alliteration – the same letter or sound at the beginning of a string of words

Ruby red raced round red rum.

Homophone – two words having the same pronunciation but different meanings

By (as in next to) buy (buy something in a shop)

Onomatopoeia – a word formed from a sound associated with its name

Buzz, sizzle

Metaphor – describing an object or action that isn't actually true, one thing is another thing

The sea is glass

Punctuation Progression

Pupils write sentences with spaces in between words (H3).

Full stops and Capital Letters

Students extend their knowledge of using capital letters for names to demarcating them correctly in a sentence. They then put a full stop at the end of the sentence.(H4)

The cat called Maisie sat on the mat.

Capital Letters for Personal Pronoun I

Students then learn to put a capital letter for the personal pronoun I (H5).

I am important so I need a capital letter!

Students then recognise that capital letters are used for names, places and days of the week. (H6)

Question Marks & Exclamation Marks

A question mark goes at the end of every question (who what why where when). (H6 H7)

An exclamation mark shows when something is surprising or thoughtful.



Commas

These are used in lists – I need bread, jam, butter and a knife.(H8 H12)



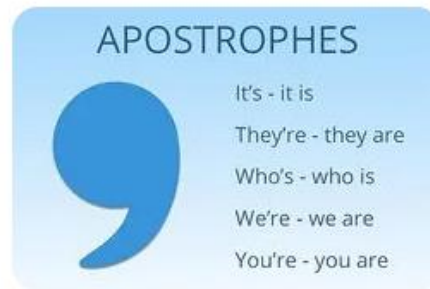
Speech Marks

Speech marks show where direct speech starts and ends.(H13)

They shouted “stop it now!” to the burglar.

“ Hello everybody ”

Apostrophes



Colon & Semi Colon

Colon :

Colons often introduce an explanation. The phrase that comes *after* the colon usually **explains** or **expands** on what came before it. It is also used before a **list**, **quotation**, **answer** or to provide **contrast**.

'Life is like a box of chocolates: you never know what you're gonna get.' In this example from *Forrest Gump*, the phrase that follows the colon explains why life is like a box of chocolates.

Semi colon ;

Connecting ideas

The most common way to use a semicolon is to help **join closely connected ideas** in a sentence. These sections must be independent and complete sentences, but closely linked in some way.

A full stop could often be used instead of a semicolon, but the effect on the reader would change. As in this famous opening line from a Charles Dickens' novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*:

- 'It was the best of times. It was the worst of times.'
- 'It was the best of times; it was the worst of times.'

Sentence Structure Progression

Students will initially begin with writing their own name independently from memory and then progress to using pictures, symbols and letters in sequence to convey meaning (H1).

Writing will then develop with a sequence of appropriate letters (many often from their name) and the pupil will be able to orally 'read' to the adult what it says (H2).

S [OO]

As writing develops students will begin to string more letters together which form word clusters with some initial sounds. Words will be in sequence with finger spaces in between to form simple sentences (H3/H4). There will be evidence of initial sounds, tricky & key words spelt correctly and some phonic attempts.

ILKTHE
DOG

Simple ideas are communicated through sentences with emerging simple connectives and conjunctions (H5).

and who until but

Writing develops into compound sentences using connectives (coordinating conjunctions) such as **and** or **but** with openers (H7).

Unfortunately the glass broke and they couldn't use it any more.

Connectives develop and a wider range are used within writing (H8).

and or but so because then that

With a range of openers to sentences such as While, When, Where.

Students begin to add description to sentences through the use of adjectives and adverbs (H7/H8).

The giant had an enormous beard.

Red squirrels enjoy eating delicious nuts.

Students begin to write more complex sentences using the word who or when (relative clauses) H10.

*There are many children **who** like to eat ice cream.*

Writing will increase in lengths to a string of more than 4 sentences. Additional subordinating conjunctions such as what, while, when, were, because are used.

While the animals were munching breakfast, two visitors arrived.

Students will use a variety of long and short sentences to add description and information. Shorter sentences are used for emphasis and there are expanded noun phrases 'lots of people' used (H11).

Within long and short sentences adverb starters and phrases are used (H10/H11).

Students start to group their writing into topics as it extends and students begin to write in paragraphs (H11).

Similies, fronted adverbials, compound and complex sentences add meaning and effect for the reader with careful choice of vocabulary (H13).

Punctuation is used with a variety of the above grammatical and sentence structures to create effect.