

Route To Success?

St. Saviour's Academy reflect on their
experience of *Pathways To Write*



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By Tracy Morris and Lynn Davis

Pathways to Write is a programme that aims to develop children's vocabulary, reading and writing skills through a mastery approach for years Reception up to Y6. It is broken down into topic focused half termly units that provide a clear progression of skills through sequences of lessons and a purposeful application of writing at the end of each unit. All units have at least one focus text to enable a smooth transition and application of both reading and writing skills.

St Saviour's has been using *Pathways* for two years and we have seen an improvement in both Reading and Writing across the whole school. It is important to stress that all stakeholders have played an important role in the intention, implementation and impact of *Pathways* across the whole school. This is something that we wanted to share in this article.

Governors

In Autumn 2019, writing was a school development target and after discussion and research it was decided to implement the *Pathways to Write* programme throughout school. It was hoped that it would equip the pupils with key skills to move them through the writing process towards their final outcome. High quality texts are used alongside clear detailed lesson plans and resources. *Pathways to Write* has ensured engaging and purposeful English lessons.

"In a recent staff meeting, which focused on writing progression, significant impact could be seen in writing against work that had been produced a couple of years ago. This is very encouraging. It is clear evidence that Pathways to Write has made a difference, and is helping with planning by including prior expectations. There are also improvements in handwriting, spelling and use of language."
English Link Governor Report Autumn 2019



Pathways to Write

Senior Leadership Team

We began our *Pathways* journey at a time when we felt we had a range of skills sets with our teachers. This ranged from experienced teachers to NQT's. Some teachers would say that they were not particularly confident with teaching some aspects of the English curriculum whereby others were extremely confident. This was evident in our monitoring and data collection outcomes. Following changes in the National Curriculum expectations and the importance of the 'mastery' approach to learning, we wanted to support all teachers and build confidence whilst having the children at the heart of our curriculum. We also wanted to build more awareness of the progression of key English skills across the whole school. We appreciated how *Pathways* revisits and embeds the key skills throughout each year group and showed how each year group has a key part to play. *Pathways* has enabled staff to clarify expectations, assisted in moderation and promoted staff well-being by cutting down planning time so that their time can be spent in the classroom facilitating learning.

"The units are high quality and have been invaluable for our staff. We have improved outcomes for the children and staff have a sharper focus on the relevant, necessary skills they need to master in each year group. The confidence of staff and pupil engagement have both increased over time. Pathways to Write supports teacher workload too!" Lynn Davis
Principal

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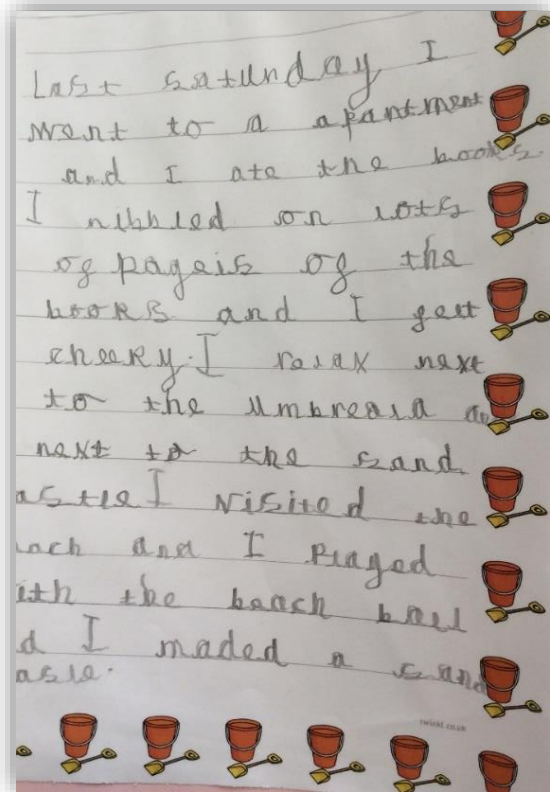
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Teachers

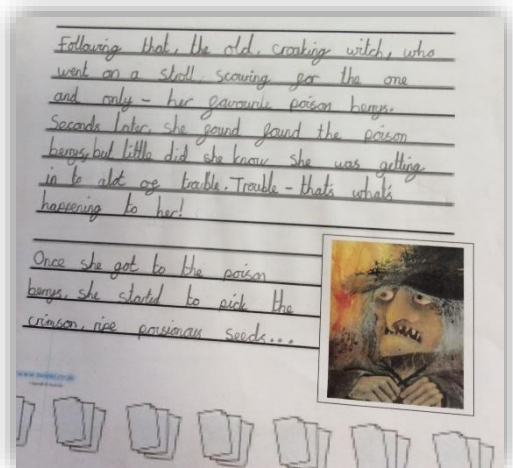
We have ensured that there is open communication between teachers and the SLT to ensure that *Pathways* is having the necessary impact. We take into account the teachers' points of view so that we can adapt and change the plans where necessary to suit the needs of our children. Here are just a few comments made by our teaching team:

"Pathways has had a positive impact on my class, previous classes and myself. For me, it is reassuring that I know I am covering all the objectives by following the programme and that my class are being exposed to all areas of the writing curriculum. The use of different outcomes per topic ensures that there is a broad range of activities and genres which keep the children interested. The book is usually covered per half term and this gives us long enough to look in depth at the book and really improve our writing as we move along. It's great that there is differentiation throughout the scheme but also that all children are completing the same story at the same time, just maybe in a different way. The challenge for the greater depth pupils is also really useful as it gives them the opportunity to embed their skills in their writing in a different way. The different books that are used throughout pathways are really interesting for the age and stage of the child and the different fiction/non-fiction texts mean there is something to keep everyone interested. All the activities are appropriate to the age group and not repetitive, ensuring the children keep interested in the text."

Miss Stephenson Year 3

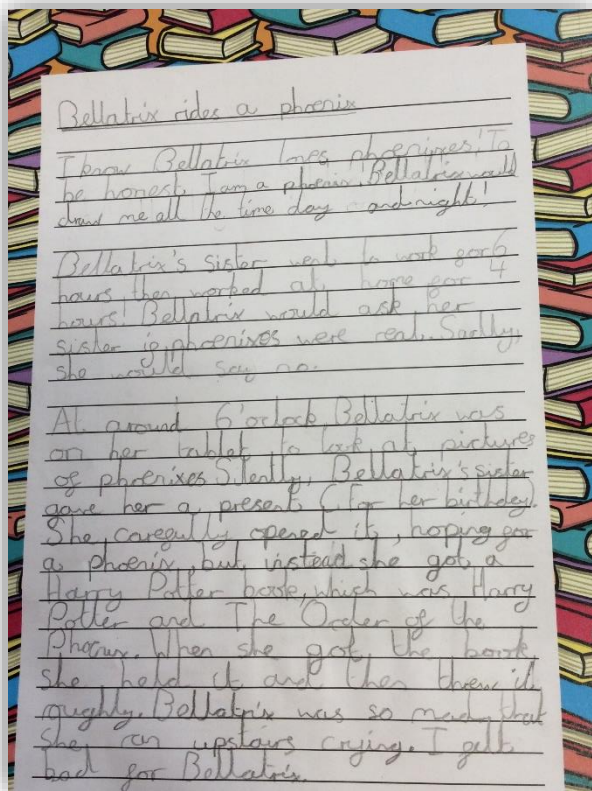


Above: Year 1 'Nibble the Book Monster' example. Below: Year 5 'The Lost Happy Endings' example.



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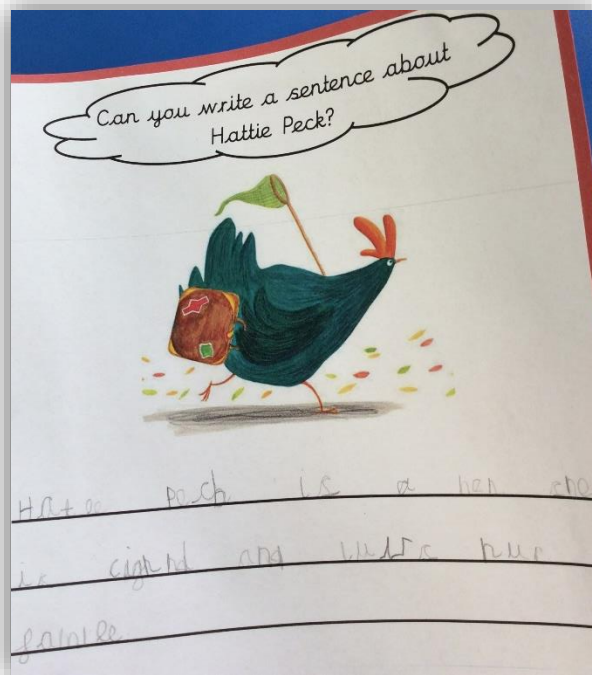
"Pathways to Write has ensured clear and structured progression throughout year groups. It shows skills to be built upon and gives children ample opportunity to level-up their writing. Differentiation for greater depth children is suggested (where appropriate) and different ways of planning for a piece of writing are also shown."

Miss Massey Jones Year 4 RQT

"Using the Pathways to Write scheme in Reception has supported the children in developing their reading and writing skills, as well as building on their vocabulary. The chosen texts within each unit are high quality, engaging and varied. The language that is used within the chosen texts, offers opportunities for the children to ask open ended questions to develop their knowledge and understanding. Each unit of planning provides the children with continuous opportunities for cross-curricular learning, alongside having the resources that you need for most lessons, already prepared for you. It is very clear through Pathways to Write, the progress that the children are making and how each unit of work builds onto the previous unit. All children are able to master new skills due to the lessons being differentiated. We have found that each lesson having a context, and the children having a purpose for their writing has engaged them further and supported their progress."

Miss Gray Reception teacher

Top left: Year 4 'Gorilla' example. Bottom left: Reception 'The Journey Home' example.



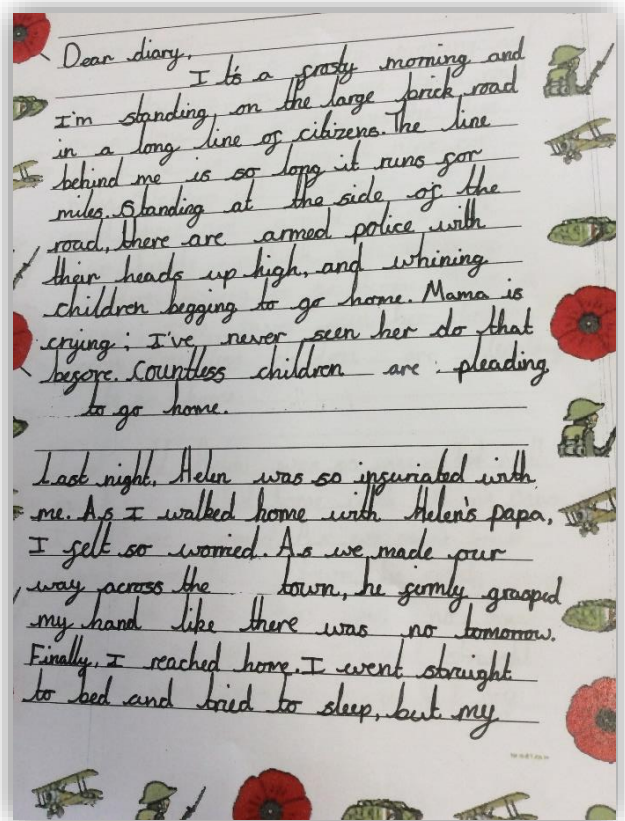
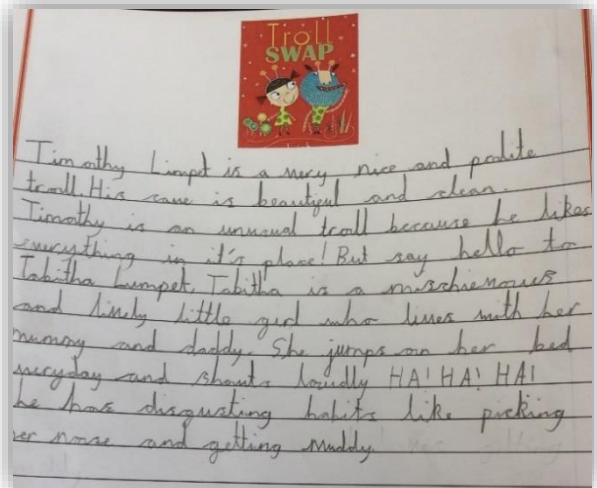
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"It gives teachers clear detailed lesson plans and resources that are linked to high-quality texts. Boy focused texts in year 2 about trolls, dragons and giants ensures everyone is hooked into the class text from the very first lesson. The lessons are sequenced well and build on prior learning. The ready-made resources which are so adaptable to my classes' needs are really useful. Mastery keys and challenges for greater depth children are really useful. I find my weaker writers are motivated by the engaging texts to have a go and write independently. I like the fact each unit develops vocabulary, grammar and punctuation skills, whilst allowing children to write for a range of purposeful genres - familiar and new. I like the time given in units for planning, drafting, writing, editing and presenting and therefore teaching children the core skills of the writing process. In other schemes I've used this is either rushed or overlooked but Pathways place a great emphasis on the children becoming effective writers for a range of audiences. I feel pathways to write, also builds children's writing stamina and at the end of the unit an extended piece of writing is an excellent way to demonstrate their new writing skills learnt. Children are proud of their end of unit pieces of work."

Miss Shaw Year 2 teacher

Top right: Year 2 'Troll Swap' example.
Bottom right: Year 6 'Star of Fear, Star of Hope' example.



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As we are progressing as a school and teacher confidence has improved, teachers are now editing and improving the units further. We are also focusing our foundation subject topics to link with *Pathways* so that children are receiving a breadth and depth of knowledge across all subjects.

Children

Pupil voice is paramount. We try to ensure that children are enjoying their learning. Here are a few comments from our children:

"You can have different ideas and write in different ways for example, I have written poetry and stories."

"I like being creative with my writing."

"We read fun books, sometimes fiction and sometimes non-fiction. I like the non-fiction texts."

"The books that we read are related to the topic we do in class."

"I like how we act out scenes from a story and then that helps with the writing because you can then imagine and feel the character and what they might do or say."

Parents

We greatly value feedback from our whole school community and In order to deliver effective teaching, we ask for feedback from parents on the teaching and learning provided in school.

"My daughter has progressed extremely well in all subjects especially English; lots of great books used to grab her enthusiasm and motivation." **Year 4 Parent**

"Lovely to see my child's enthusiasm for reading and writing" Reception Parent

"I am very proud that my child's writing is displayed in school- I can't believe how good it is!" **Year 2 Parent**

Impact Summary

As a result of the implementation of *Pathways to Write*

- ✓ Teachers are accurately planning and teaching for the needs of the children.
- ✓ Progression in writing in year groups and across the whole school can be seen.
- ✓ Improved teacher confidence
- ✓ More effective lesson structure
- ✓ Expectations for the planning and teaching of writing are embedded across the whole school.

Next steps

- To monitor the impact of *Pathways to Write* on standards in writing.
- To continue to work with subject leaders to ensure that the application of reading and writing skills is developed in their subject area.
- To continue work with subject leads to ensure vocabulary is developed in their subject area.



Due to Covid 19, staff and children have not been able to complete a full year of teaching the *Pathways to Write* programme. However, we did continue to implement the programme through remote learning in lockdown.