

Lightcliffe C of E Primary School
Early Years Foundation Stage

Reception Writing Curriculum

In partnership to Educate, Nurture & Empower



Intent

At Lightcliffe, we believe that every child is a writer. Our intent is to equip all children with the foundational skills they need to communicate their ideas with confidence, clarity and creativity.

By the end of Reception, children will:

- **Develop strong oracy skills**, enabling them to speak in full sentences, use growing vocabulary and express ideas clearly.
- **Build fine-motor control**, including the strength, dexterity and pencil grip needed for fluent writing.
- **Hear, segment and blend sounds**, applying phonics independently to spell words.
- **Recognise and use graphemes** to represent sounds in words accurately.
- **Write for meaning**, drawing on stories, experiences and curriculum themes.
- **Compose simple sentences**, re-reading them to check they make sense.

We intentionally teach communication, mark-making and writing as separate developmental strands so children secure each building block before combining them for independent sentence writing.

Our Approach

Our Reception writing curriculum is built on three mutually supportive strands:
I am a communicator, I am a mark-maker, and I am a writer.

1. Communication and Language First

Talk underpins writing. Children experience:

- High-quality back-and-forth conversations
- Vocabulary-rich storytelling, drama and role-play
- Oral rehearsal of ideas before writing
- Opportunities to explain, describe and retell

This ensures children develop the language structures needed for early composition.

2. Physical Development and Mark-Making

Writing begins with physical readiness. Children:

- Build strength, stability and coordination
- Use a wide range of fine-motor and gross-motor activities
- Learn correct pencil grip and posture
- Practise mark-making that progresses naturally into letter formation

These skills support fluency, stamina and control.

3. Systematic Application of Phonics

As graphemes are taught, children apply them immediately in writing:

- Segmenting words
- Spelling using taught GPCs
- Re-reading writing to check accuracy and meaning

4. Book-Based Learning

Texts are carefully selected to:

- Enrich vocabulary
- Provide strong language patterns
- Inspire writing outcomes
- Support curriculum themes

5. Purposeful Writing Opportunities

Children write:

- Labels
- Captions
- Lists
- Simple sentences
- Story retellings
- Fact-based writing

Outcomes link to stories, experiences and wider curriculum learning.

6. Responsive Teaching and Assessment

Teachers observe children's talk, mark-making and writing daily, identifying next steps and providing targeted support to ensure all children keep up.

The Three Strands of Early Writing

ESSENTIALWRITING Reception Long-Term Overview			
	I am a communicator	I am a mark-maker	I am a writer
Educational programmes (based on Statutory Framework for the EYFS - square brackets denote additional guidance)	<p>Communication and Language</p> <p>The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, storytelling, and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.</p>	<p>Physical Development</p> <p>Strength, co-ordination, and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination, and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being.</p> <p>Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.</p>	<p>Literacy</p> <p>It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading and writing. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading [begun in the reception year] involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing). (Fluent and automatic transcription enables the writer to be freed up to increasingly control and enjoy their composition, and to check it themselves. It also aids reading fluency. Once children realise that writing is something they can all do, that it has purpose and is a means of communication, they will begin to write with intent and enjoyment.)</p>

Development Matters

Educational Programmes (Development Matters)	<p>Communication and Language – Development Matters: 3- and 4-year-olds will be learning to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sing a large repertoire of songs. Know many rhymes, be able to talk about familiar books, and be able to tell a long story Develop their communication but may continue to have problems with irregular tenses and plurals, such as 'runned' for 'ran', 'swimmed' for 'swam' Develop their pronunciation but may have problems saying: - some sounds: r, j, th, ch, and sh <ul style="list-style-type: none"> multi-syllabic words such as 'pterodactyl', 'planetarium' or 'hippopotamus' Use longer sentences of four to six words 	<p>Physical Development – Development Matters: 3- and 4-year-olds will be learning to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use large-muscle movements to wave flags and streamers, paint and make marks Use one-handed tools and equipment, for example, making snips in paper with scissors Use a comfortable grip with good control when holding pens and pencils Show a preference for a dominant hand. <p>Physical Development - Development Matters: children in reception will be learning to: Develop the foundations of a handwriting style which is fast, accurate and efficient</p>
	<p>Communication and Language – Development Matters: children in reception will be learning to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand how to listen carefully and why listening is important Learn new vocabulary Use new vocabulary through the day Ask questions to find out more and to check they understand what has been said to them Articulate their ideas and thoughts in well-formed sentences Connect one idea or action to another using a range of connectives Describe events in some detail Use talk to help work out problems and organise thinking and activities, and to explain how things work and why they might happen Develop social phrases Engage in storytimes Listen to and talk about stories to build familiarity and understanding 	<p>Literacy – Development Matters: 3- and 4-year-olds will be learning to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the five key concepts about print: - print has meaning - print can have different purposes - we read English text from left to right and from top to bottom - the names of the different parts of a book - page sequencing Develop their phonological awareness, so that they can: - spot and suggest rhymes - count or clap syllables in a word - recognise words with the same initial sound Engage in extended conversations about stories, learning new vocabulary Use some of their print and letter knowledge in their early writing Write some or all of their name Write some letters accurately <p>Literacy - Development Matters: children in reception will be learning to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read individual letters by saying the sounds for them. Blend sounds into words, so that they can read short words made up of known letter-sound correspondences. Read some letter groups that each represent one sound and say sounds for them. Read a few common exception words matched to the school's phonic programme Read simple phrases and sentences made up of words with known letter-sound correspondences and, where necessary, a few exception words

Texts

How We Select Our Core Texts in Reception

The books chosen for each half-term are carefully selected to enrich children's learning and provide meaningful opportunities for talk, reading and writing. Each text has been chosen for one or more of the following reasons:

1. To deepen understanding of curriculum themes

Our texts link closely to the *Understanding the World* curriculum so that children encounter rich vocabulary and ideas within meaningful contexts. These books help children build knowledge, make connections between subjects and apply new language in their play and writing.

For example, *The Search for the Giant Arctic Jellyfish* was selected to support learning about the Arctic and gave children a powerful stimulus for discussion, role-play and writing.

2. To foster a love of reading

We provide children with a balanced and engaging reading diet that includes:

- Classic stories
- Patterned and repetitive texts
- Funny read-alouds
- High-quality contemporary picture books
- Informative non-fiction

Many of these books include repeated refrains and strong storytelling patterns, making them ideal for joining in, retelling and developing narrative structure. Others offer rich emotional content, encouraging children to wonder, discuss characters and explore themes in greater depth. Several texts naturally lend themselves to creating new versions or imagining further adventures with familiar characters.

3. To strengthen the link between phonics and writing

Texts are deliberately selected to match recently taught phonemes and graphemes so children can apply their phonic knowledge immediately and with confidence.

For instance, *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear?* was used in the week following the introduction of the “ear” grapheme, enabling children to read, spot and use the sound within a meaningful context.

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Writing Purpose	Inform (6 steps) Entertain (6 steps)	Inform (6 steps) Entertain (6 steps)	Inform (6 steps) Entertain (6 steps)	Inform (6 steps) Entertain (6 steps)	Inform (6 steps) Entertain (6 steps)	Inform (6 steps) Entertain (6 steps)
Written Outcomes	All About Me Books Favourite Story Books	My Special People Books Story Books (pattern)	Things I Like (unique me) Books Animal Stories	My Celebration Books Journey Stories	My Amazing Body Books Traditional Tale Books	Our Natural World Books My Very Own Story Book
Book Suggestions						