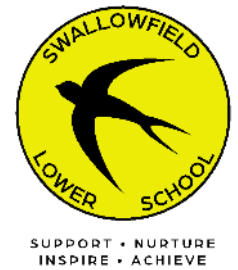


Writing: A Guide for Parents and Carers

At Swallowfield we believe that writing is an integral part of both the English curriculum and the wider curriculum. Along with reading, speaking and listening, it makes a significant contribution to the development of children as thinkers and learners. It is essential that children become both competent and confident writers to enable them to succeed across the curriculum and throughout life.



How do we teach writing at Swallowfield?

Early Years (Busy Bees and Reception)

In the Early Years, children develop their gross and fine motor skills and practice mark making through a variety of activities, many of which are play based. Speaking and listening is a big focus and children are provided with opportunities to develop their verbal communication skills. As they progress towards Reception, the children are encouraged to use their growing phonic knowledge to build words and use these to represent meaning. Children are taught to write their name and to form lower case letters. Through lots of oral rehearsal and modelling, children are then taught to use a sequence of words to form a sentence. The children are taught to use their phonics to 'Fred talk' words (sound out) before writing them down and they also practice spelling common tricky words. The use of capital letters and full stops is also introduced.

Key Stage One (Years 1 and 2)

In years 1 and 2, the children continue to practice writing words to communicate their ideas. They are taught to construct simple sentences and later extend these to complex and compound sentences. The children are taught to explore and write a variety of text types which include stories, information texts, poetry, instructions and recounts. Writing in KS1 is taught in a variety of ways, with oral rehearsal as a focus. The Mighty Writer is often used as a planning tool to help the children structure and sequence their ideas, along with other writing frames and planning templates. In years 1 and 2 the children are taught spelling; firstly through phonics and later by looking at spelling rules and patterns. They are also taught to spell common exception words, as well as to use a range of punctuation as set out in the National Curriculum. In addition to the transcription and composition skills, the children are also taught specific writing vocabulary and skills through grammar lessons.

Key Stage Two (Years 3,4,5 and 6)

As the children progress to KS2, they continue to explore a variety of text types and are provided with opportunities to write for real purposes. As set out in the National Curriculum, spelling remains a focus and is taught explicitly. The children are taught to draw on their reading knowledge and rich text examples are used as good examples. Through discussions with their peers and adults the children are given opportunities to plan and write a range of texts. They are taught to use punctuation and vocabulary for effect and they begin to look at the impact their writing can have on the reader. As they progress through the key stage, they develop their stamina for writing and are able to write effectively and coherently for a range of purposes and audiences. The children are taught editing skills and are encouraged to review and improve their writing. Alongside the teaching of writing, grammar is taught explicitly. The children are taught the content appropriate for their year group, as set out in the National Curriculum, and gain a detailed understanding of the mechanics of writing.

How can you support your child at home?

- Have a small selection of writing materials readily available at home. These might include scrap paper, pencils, crayons, chalk, whiteboard pens, sticky labels.
- Remember, talk comes first! Many children benefit from orally rehearsing their ideas before writing them down. You can provide opportunities for them to practice this by talking to your child, encouraging them to express their ideas, listening to them and responding in full sentences.
- Try fun activities to develop your child's fine motor skills and strengthen their writing hand. For example: painting, cutting, squeezing playdough, picking up small things with tweezers and pegs.
- Let writing play a part in your family's daily life. For example: making lists and labels, keeping a family diary, leaving notes for each other in busy households, keeping in touch with distant friends and relatives, designing and making home-made notepads, greetings cards and stories.
- Writing practice doesn't have to be lengthy, any form of writing practice will be beneficial and it's important to make it a fun experience for all. Try to follow your child's interests.
- Focus on writing for enjoyment and praising effort; rather than perfection!

Additional Materials

If you would like more information about how we teach writing at Swallowfield, please visit our website.

<https://swallowfieldlowerschool.co.uk/english/> Alternatively, please speak to your child's class teacher or Miss Potter (Writing Leader).