



Writing Offer

"Whatever you do, do it for the glory of God." (1 Corinthians 10:31)

Intent

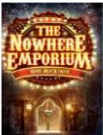
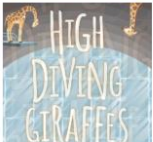
Our intent is to develop confident, articulate and creative writers who can communicate effectively for a range of purposes and audiences. At St Mark's, we recognise that writing is a complex skill and that both transcription and composition are essential. This begins with mark making in Reception and develops through to Year 6, where pupils write with increasing stamina, independence and a sustained author's voice. As a Catholic school, our writing curriculum reflects our mission, "With Jesus, live life to the full." Pupils are given meaningful opportunities to write through RE, prayer, liturgy and CST, helping them reflect, respond and express their faith and values while developing writing as a tool for communication, advocacy and positive change.

Implementation

We provide a strong foundation in early reading and writing through fidelity to the FFT Phonics programme, ensuring children develop the phonics knowledge and fluency needed to become successful writers. Rooted in our Catholic mission and our school charism, "We are a community of faith and learning", we nurture every child as uniquely created and loved by God. Through our early reading and writing curriculum, we develop both technical skills and a love of language as a gift from God, enabling children to communicate, reflect and share their understanding of the world with purpose, confidence and joy.

We follow the Literacy Shed planning. Children are immersed in high-quality texts, film and discussion that inspire meaningful writing opportunities. Our curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure progression in vocabulary, grammar, transcription and composition, allowing all pupils to develop independence resilience and pride in writing. Whilst we follow Literacy Shed we use our professional judgement to meet the needs and interests of our learners and adapt to specific cohorts – e.g. high percentages of EAL learners. This ensures children are inspired and engaged in their writing.

An example of a term's overview for Literacy Shed is below.

Spring	2 weeks	2 weeks	2 weeks	2 weeks	2 weeks	1 week
						
	Clockwork Philip Pullman	Aviatrice FILM	The Nowhere Emporium Ross MacKenzie	Rooftoppers Katherine Rundell	High Diving Giraffes FILM	The Lego Story FILM
	- Persuasion - Suspense - Ghostly narrative	- Biographical - Active/ Passive voice - Direct/ indirect speech - Figurative language	- Suspense narrative - Biography	- Newspaper - Diary - Setting description - Narrative	- Explanation - Report/recount - Newspaper report	• Narrative • Showing passing of time • Report

Across the school, oral rehearsal is central to our approach, enabling pupils to develop vocabulary, sentence structure and confidence through purposeful talk before writing. Further to this, where possible we offer opportunities for drama as our pupils learn through doing and experience. This includes role play, hot seating and freeze frames. This is crucial for our lowest

20% attainers and EAL learners. In addition to the daily offer, we host termly poetry competitions, which gives purpose and an audience for our children's writing.

Transcription: Handwriting and Spelling:

Importantly, as outlined in the Government writing framework, we are aiming for automaticity for children with transcription. This enables children to focus on their composition. We recognise to achieve automaticity as outlined in the framework ([The writing framework](#)) '*this requires explicit teaching, extensive practice and effective feedback.*' Teachers understand this importance and provide daily opportunities throughout the school in English lessons but also in other curriculum areas to ensure the skills are regularly practiced and developed.

Handwriting:

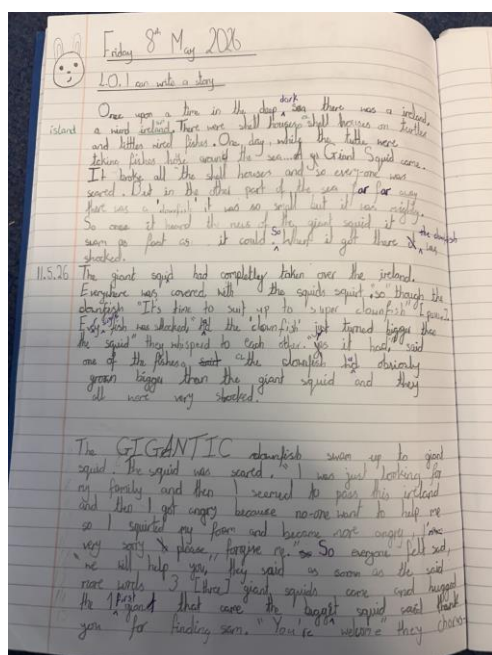
St Mark's has a progressive systematic handwriting guidance in place which is embedded throughout the school.

All staff have extremely high standards for presentation and handwriting. In all lessons teachers model provide a teaching model. For the younger year groups letter formation is explicitly referred to when appropriate.

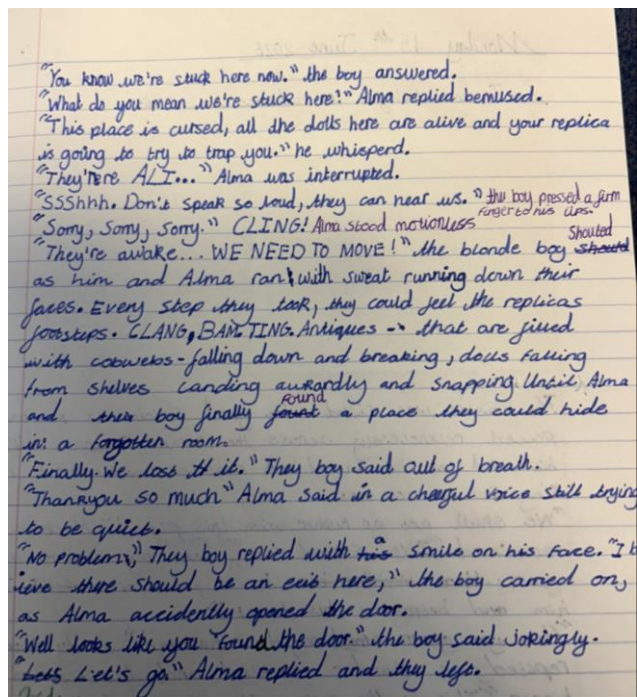
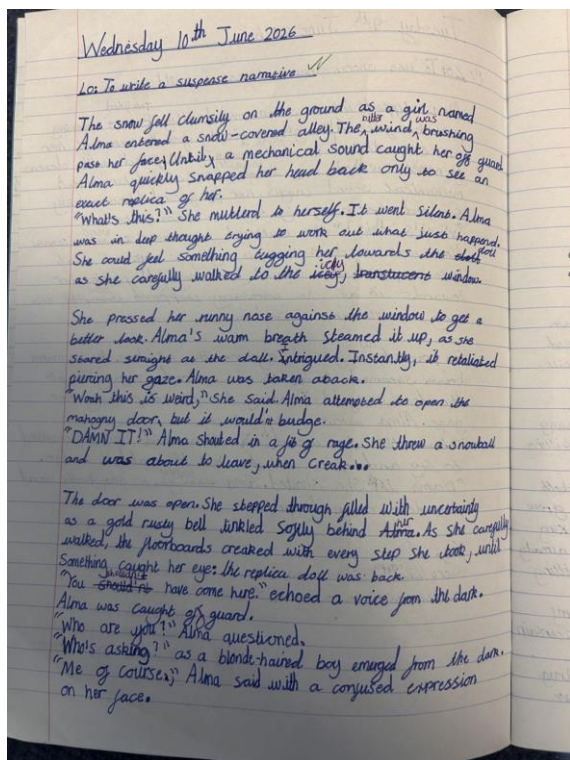
All classrooms have carefully considered the seating plan for all children. Ensuring excellent posture and left-hand writers. This is explicitly noted and referred to in our handwriting policy.

In Year 5 children can earn their pen licences when they are able to show clear, consistent joined handwriting, which is sustained over multiple pieces of writing. This is motivating for our children and an excellent way of rewarding hard work.

We are proud of the progress our pupils make with the handwriting policy and this is clear to see in our pupils' writing books.



Year 3 writing May 2026



Year 6 writing June 2026

Spelling:

Spelling is an important part of transcription – outlined clearly in the Government writing framework.

Reception and Year 1 use the FFT Phonics scheme for their daily phonics. This scheme supports the understanding and development of spellings through a systematic approach that includes:

Grapheme-Phoneme Correspondence (GPCs): FFT teaches children to match sounds to letters, which is essential for spellings. In addition to this, the programme's approach of shared readers, interactive activities and regular assessment ensure the children are well prepared.

Year 1: in addition to daily phonics. Children are taught the prefixes, suffixes and spelling patterns outline in the National Curriculum.

Year 2 Spelling with the Jungle Club is FFT's online spelling programme designed to help Year 2 children build strong, confident spelling habits. It uses a fun jungle-themed world to keep children motivated while they practise the key spelling patterns, rules and tricky words expected by the end of Year 2. The programme revisits key phonics patterns (digraphs, trigraphs, alternative spellings) that children learned in Year 1 and deepens their understanding through spelling practice. This helps them to recognise the same sound in different spellings and to apply phonics knowledge when writing, not just reading. They also begin to learn more complex spelling rules (e.g., adding suffixes, soft c, homophones) This programme supports mastery. Children get frequent, short bursts of practice, repetition of key patterns and opportunities to apply spelling in context.

Key Stage 2

As the children progress into Year 3 we follow the Spelling Shed approach to explicit teaching of grammar. Embedding taught skills and building on the foundations set in previous years. Each week the children learn a spelling pattern and apply this pattern in their writing. In addition to the

patterns, time is spent learning the common exemption words, prefixes and suffixes and words which are commonly misspelt.

Composition

At St Mark's we take time to ensure that sentence composition is understood. We recognise that ideas must be verbalised, rehearsed and refined. From Reception there is a large emphasis on children sharing their ideas before recording. Time is given to oral rehearsal throughout writing across the school both with staff and with peers. In addition to oral rehearsal, teachers are very clear about the explicit teaching of sentence structure and what makes up a sentence. As outlined in the writing framework sentence structure is fundamental.

Literacy Shed planning enables the teachers to have a framework from which to tweak their lessons to meet the needs of the learners. At St Mark's, we ensure that all writing lessons follow the structure of 'I do, We do, You do', which enables the children to see a 'WAGOLL.' Further to this, teachers narrate their author decisions to ensure this is explicit to children.

Each unit has a written outcome and teaches the children the features required to write in chosen genre.

Scaffolds

Writing is complex and for those children who find the automaticity of writing challenging, additional scaffolds are provided. Wherever possible our quality first teaching will include relevant visuals, a short film or clip or physical props. This brings the writing to life and enables a greater understanding for all. All teachers provide a range of scaffolds, depending on the learning including sentence stems, word banks, clozed procedures and sound mats. We use Widgit to provide visual aids for our SEND and EAL learners. Bespoke support is in place of children of the greatest level of need.

Live marking

We provide instant feedback for the children during the writing task, this is both oral and written. In the younger years oral feedback is the most impactful. In Key Stage 2 the staff will provide more live written feedback but this is supported through a 1:1 conversation with a pupil or a small group to address a common misconception or barrier to learning.

Interventions

Children who are identified as either falling behind their peers or who have already fallen receive targeted interventions to close the gap and make accelerated progress. The interventions depend on the age and stage of the pupils and the specific barrier identified as to why the children have not made progress. The intervention offer includes:

- Colourful Semantics
- Beat Dyslexia
- Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) writing

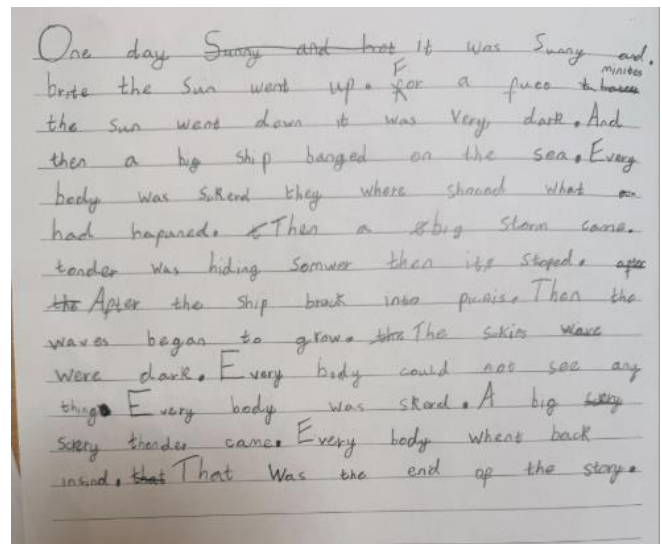
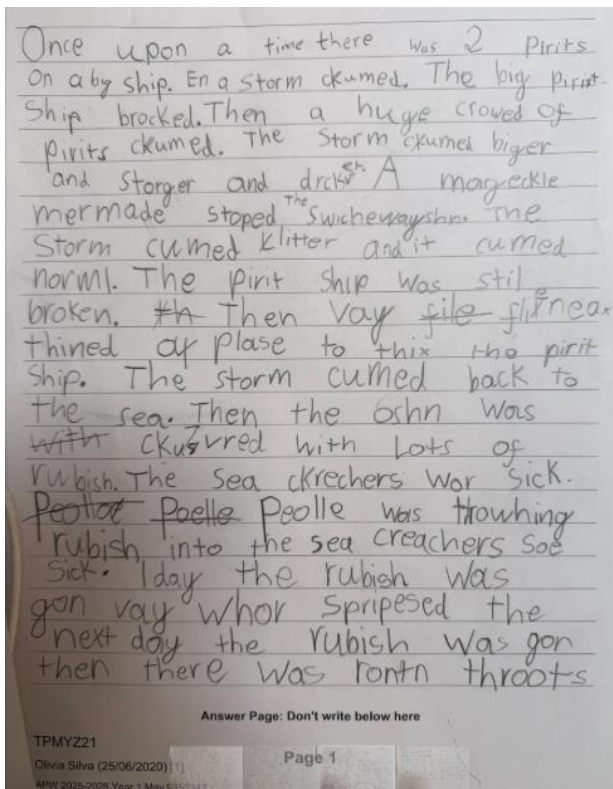
Children who join the school who are new to English have a bespoke offer according to their needs.

Assessment and Monitoring

Pupils writing is formally assessed termly using the year group writing standards. To support teachers in making their judgements the English lead provides CPD to support opportunities to look at exemplifications and form judgements. In addition to internal moderation, we are committed to provided external moderation opportunities both within the OLOW Trust and other local schools.

To further support teachers in making their writing judgements the school use No More Marking to provide 'cold writing tasks,' use of AI-enhanced comparative judgements and national benchmarks. Teachers have found this a very supportive tool, which has improved our writing assessments.

Below are two examples from Year 1's writing task from May 2026.



Impact

Our writing offer at St Mark's is systematic and robust, designed to cater for all learners. The impact on our children is that they have automaticity with transcription and are able to focus on writing for purpose and their chosen audience. With the implementation of FFT phonics through Reception and Key Stage One, our children start Year 3 with solid foundations to become a skilled writer. The children are able to plan writing, draft and edit work through oral rehearsal and constructive feedback. As the children progress through Key Stage 2 they can sustain writing and manipulative language, grammar and punctuation for effect.

We measure impact through children demonstrating they can apply their taught skills in all areas of the curriculum. We carry out book looks and hold challenging conversations during pupil progress meetings. Children's progress is carefully tracked and a robust plan of support enacted when needed.

Although the DfE does not set expectations for the amount of writing pupils should complete in each year group, school leaders feel that having age-related guidance would be helpful. For example, an extended piece of writing could be expected to be:

- Year 1: about half a page by the end of year 1 (4–6 sentences)
- Year 2: about three-quarters of a page
- Year 3: about one page
- Year 4: about one and a half pages
- Year 5: about two pages
- Year 6: about two and a half to three pages

These expectations are intended as a guide and may vary depending on the type of writing, the purpose of the task and the needs of individual pupils.

To help pupils build writing stamina and apply their writing skills across the curriculum, teachers should provide regular opportunities for extended writing in a range of subjects, including English, RE, history, geography and science. Pupils should complete at least one extended piece of writing each week, either in English or another curriculum subject, with opportunities to write for different purposes and audiences throughout the year.