

Writing Expectations for Early Years

Birth to 11 months

Children's later writing is based on skills and understandings which they develop as babies and toddlers. Before they can write, they need to learn to use spoken language to communicate. Later they learn to write down the words they can say.

8 to 20 months

Early mark-making is not the same as writing. It is a sensory and physical experience for babies and toddlers, which they do not yet connect to forming symbols which can communicate meaning.

16 to 26 months

Early mark-making is not the same as writing. It is a sensory and physical experience for babies and toddlers, which they do not yet connect to forming symbols which can communicate meaning.

22 to 36 months

Distinguishes between the different marks they make.

30 to 50 months

Sometimes gives meaning to marks as they draw and paint.

Ascribes meanings to marks that they see in different places

40 to 60+ months

Gives meaning to marks they make as they draw, write and paint.

Begins to break the flow of speech into words.

Continues a rhyming string.

Hears and says the initial sound in words.

Can segment the sounds in simple words and blend them together.

Links sounds to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet.

Uses some clearly identifiable letters to communicate meaning, representing some sounds correctly and in sequence.

Writes own name and other things such as labels, captions.

Attempts to write short sentences in meaningful contexts.

Early Learning Goal

Children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

Writing Expectations at the end of Year 1

Working towards the expected standard

The pupil can:

Give meaning to marks they make as they write.

Write phrases and sentences following oral rehearsal.

Segment sounds in words and blend them together when writing phrases and sentences.

Link sounds to letter, sounding and naming the letters of the alphabet.

Write own name and other things such as labels and captions. Orally rehearse sentences before attempting to write.

Begin to read back checking for sense.

Spell some common exception words from the year 1 list.

Form clearly identifiable letters and write from left to right.

Working at the expected standard

The pupil can:

Write phrases and sentences that make sense to the reader.

Show awareness of the use of capital letters and full stops for punctuation.

Segment sounds in words, including long vowels, and blend together when writing.

Make phonically-plausible attempts when spelling new words.

Reads back to check for sense.

Spell many common exception words from the year 1 list.

Form letters mostly in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.

Use finger spaces to separate words.

Use coordination to extend a sentence using 'and', for example.

Working at greater depth within the expected standard

The pupil can:

Write sentences that are sequenced to form a short narrative (real or fictional).

Extends sentences with the use of and or then, for example.

Demarcate some sentences with capital letters, full stops and question marks.

Segment spoken words into phonemes and represent these by graphemes, spelling some words correctly and making phonically-plausible attempts at others.

Spell most common exception words from the year 1 list.

Reads back checking for sense and begins to make changes.

Form letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.

Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another in some of their writing.

Use spacing between words consistently.

Writing Expectations at the end of Year 2

Working towards the expected standard

The pupil can:

Write sentences that are sequenced to form a short narrative (real or fictional).

Demarcate some sentences with capital letters and full stops.

Segment spoken words into phonemes and represent these by graphemes, spelling some words correctly and making phonically-plausible attempts at others.

Spell some common exception words.*

Form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.

Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another in some of their writing.

Use spacing between words.

Working at the expected standard

The pupil can:

Write simple, coherent narratives about personal experiences and those of others (real or fictional).

Write about real events, recording these simply and clearly.

Demarcate most sentences in their writing with capital letters and full stops and use question marks correctly when required.

Use present and past tense mostly correctly and consistently.

Use coordination (e.g. or/and/but) and some subordination (e.g. when/if/that/because) to join clauses.

Segment spoken words into phonemes and represent these by graphemes, spelling many of these words correctly and making phonically-plausible attempts at others.

Spell many common exception words.*

Form capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters.

Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

Working at greater depth within the expected standard

The pupil can:

Write effectively and coherently for different purposes, drawing on their reading to inform the vocabulary and grammar of their writing.

Make simple additions, revisions and proof-reading corrections to their own writing.

Use the punctuation taught at key stage 1 mostly correctly.^

Spell most common exception words.*

Add suffixes to spell most words correctly in their writing (e.g. -ment, -ness, -ful, -less, -ly).*

Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join some letters.

Writing Expectations at the end of Year 3

Working towards the expected standard

The pupil can:

Write simple, coherent narratives about personal experiences and those of others (real or fictional).

Write about real events, recording these simply and clearly.

Demarcate most sentences in their writing with capital letters and full stops and use exclamation marks and question marks correctly when required.

Use present and past tense mostly correctly and consistently.

Use co-ordination (e.g. or/and/but) and some subordination (e.g. when/if/that/because) to join clauses.

Segment spoken words into phonemes and represent these by graphemes, spelling many of these words correctly and making phonically-plausible attempts at others.

Spell many common exception words from the Year 2 list correctly.

Form capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters.

Working at the expected standard

The pupil can:

Write effectively and coherently for different purposes, drawing on their reading to inform the vocabulary and grammar of their writing.

Make use of paragraphing and organisational devices to structure writing.

Use co-ordination and subordination to extend sentences (e.g. when, if, because, although).

Make simple additions, revisions and proof-reading corrections to their own writing.

Use the punctuation taught at key stage 1 correctly.

Spell most common exception words from the Year 2 list and some from the Year 3/4 list.

Spell contracted words correctly.

Add suffixes to spell most words correctly in their writing (eg -ment, -ness, -ful, -less, -ly).

Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters.

Working at greater depth within the expected standard

The pupil can:

Write narratives with some description to setting and character.

Signpost the reader through non-fiction by using organisational devices for clarity.

Use of paragraphs is more consistent across the range.

More varied tenses used e.g. perfect form.

Some use of punctuation for direct speech.

Writing Expectations at the end of Year 4

Working towards the expected standard

The pupil can:

Write effectively and coherently for different purposes, drawing on their reading to inform the vocabulary and grammar of their writing.

Use of paragraphing and organisational devices to structure writing for the reader.

Use co-ordination and subordination to extend sentences.

Make additions, revisions and proof-reading corrections to their own writing.

Use the comma for lists correctly.

Spell many common exception words from the Years 3/4 list.

Spell contracted words for possession correctly.

Add suffixes to spell most words correctly in their writing.

Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes to join letters.

Working at the expected standard

The pupil can:

Write narratives with detail provided for setting and character, including some use of figurative language.

Signpost the reader through non-fiction by using a variety of organisational devices for clarity.

Use of paragraphs is consistent across the range.

More varied tenses used e.g. perfect form.

Use of punctuation for direct speech mostly correctly.

Use of comma to mark clauses sometimes.

Extend sentences using a range of conjunctions appropriate to the genre.

Edit work on the run and make additions, corrections to their own writing.

Spell most words from the Years 3/4 list correctly.

Writing is joined and legible.

Some use of fronted adverbials to add interest, followed by a comma.

Working at greater depth within the expected standard

The pupil can:

Write narratives with a well-structured plot to engage the reader.

Make use of figurative language for effect.

Explore different formats to present non-fiction for reader appeal.

Select vocabulary more precisely, especially more sophisticated synonyms.

Varies sentence starters considering the placement of subordinating clauses.

Writing Expectations at the end of Year 5

Working towards the expected standard

The pupil can:

Write narratives with details provided for setting and character, including some use of figurative language.

Signpost the reader through non-fiction by using a variety of organisational devices for clarity.

Use of paragraphs is consistent across the range.

More varied tenses used e.g. perfect form, modal, progressive.

Use of punctuation for direct speech mostly correctly.

Use of comma to mark clauses sometimes.

Extends sentences using a range of conjunctions appropriate to the genre.

Edit work on the run.

Spell some words from the Year 5/6 list correctly.

Writing is joined and legible.

Working at the expected standard

The pupil can:

Write narratives with a well structured plot to engage the reader.

Make use of figurative language for effect.

Explore different formats to present non-fiction for reader appeal.

Select vocabulary more precisely, especially more sophisticated synonyms.

Some use of fronted adverbials to add interest, followed by a comma.

Use of punctuation for direct speech is accurate, including commas.

Vary sentence starters considering the placement of subordinating clauses.

Write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting language that shows good awareness of the reader (e.g. first person in a diary, direct address in instructions or persuasion).

Some correct use of commas for clauses and for some parenthesis, including commas, brackets and dashes.

Use a range of devices to build cohesion (e.g. conjunctions, adverbials, pronouns, synonyms) within and across paragraphs.

Use verb tenses consistently and correctly throughout their writing.

Working at greater depth within the expected standard

The pupil can:

In narratives, describe settings, characters and atmosphere.

dialogue in narratives to convey character and advance action.

Select vocabulary and grammatical structures that reflect what the writing requires, doing this mostly appropriately (e.g. using contracted forms in dialogue, passive use of verbs, using modal verbs to suggest degrees of possibility).

Use the range of punctuation taught at key stage 2 mostly correctly (e.g. inverted commas and other punctuation to indicate direct speech).

Spell correctly most words from the Year 5/6 spelling list and use a dictionary to check the spelling of uncommon or more ambitious vocabulary.

Maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed.

Writing Expectations at the end of Year 6

Working towards the expected standard

The pupil can:

Write for a range of purposes.

Use paragraphs to organise ideas.

In narratives, describe settings and characters.

In non-fiction, use simple devices to structure writing and support the reader (e.g. headings, sub-headings, bullet points).

Use capital letters, full stops, commas for lists, question mark and apostrophe mostly correctly.

Spell most words from the Year 3/4 list and some from the Year 5/6 list.

Write legibly.

Working at the expected standard

The pupil can:

Write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting language that shows good awareness of the reader (e.g. first person in a diary, direct address in instructions or persuasion).

In narratives, describe settings, characters and atmosphere.

Integrate dialogue in narratives to convey character and advance action.

Select vocabulary and grammatical structures that reflect what the writing requires, doing this mostly appropriately (e.g. using contracted forms in dialogue, passive use of verbs, using modal verbs to suggest degrees of possibility).

Use a range of devices to build cohesion (e.g. conjunctions, adverbials, pronouns, synonyms) within and across paragraphs.

Use verb tenses consistently and correctly throughout their writing.

Use the range of punctuation taught at key stage 2 mostly correctly (e.g. inverted commas and other punctuation to indicate direct speech).

Spell correctly most words from the Year 5/6 spelling list and use a dictionary to check the spelling of uncommon or more ambitious vocabulary.

Maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed.

Working at greater depth within the expected standard

The pupil can:

Write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting the appropriate form and drawing independently on what they have read as models for their own writing (e.g. literary language, characterisation, structure).

Distinguish between the language of speech and writing and choose the appropriate register.

Exercise an assured and conscious control over levels of formality, particularly through manipulating grammar and vocabulary to achieve this.

Use the range of punctuation taught at key stage 2 correctly (e.g. semi-colons, dashes, colons, hyphens) and when necessary, use such punctuation precisely to enhance meaning and avoid ambiguity.

There are no additional statements for spelling and handwriting.