

Norton Road Primary School

Writing Curriculum Framework

2026-2027

Writing Lead: L. Adams

1. Why Writing Matters at Norton Road Primary School

Writing is one of the most cognitively demanding things we ask children to do. It requires pupils to manage handwriting, spelling, sentence construction, vocabulary, text structure, and audience awareness simultaneously - and to do all of this without support once they write independently.

Our curriculum is designed so that each of these demands is taught explicitly and practised enough that the simpler ones become automatic. When handwriting and spelling are fluent, children have cognitive space for what they want to say and how to say it well. When they understand how sentences are built, they can use that knowledge in service of their ideas. When they know who will read their writing and why it exists, they have a reason to care about its quality.

At Norton Road Primary School, we want every pupil to think of themselves as a writer - not as someone completing a task, but as someone who has something worth saying and the skill to say it. Children who see themselves as writers produce better writing, persist through difficulty, and revise because they care about the outcome.

This framework draws on the National Curriculum for England (DfE, 2013), the DfE Writing Framework (2025), and the Education Endowment Foundation's *Improving Literacy* guidance for Key Stages 1 and 2 (EEF, 2021). It is also informed by Writing for Pleasure research (Young et al.) and the Ark Academy Sentence Mastery programme. References are provided at the end of this document.

The Simple View of Writing

Writing is the product of two dimensions, as described in the DfE Writing Framework (2025) and reflected in the National Curriculum (DfE, 2013): 'It is essential that teaching develops pupils' competence in these two dimensions.' Both must be taught directly. If either is weak, writing fails.

Transcription	Composition
The technical ability to form letters and spell words accurately and automatically. Addressed through: Handwriting Spelling	The ability to generate, organise, and express ideas in writing with precision and impact. Addressed through: Vocabulary Morphology Sentence Mastery Composition

A child with sophisticated ideas but poor handwriting and spelling cannot get those ideas onto paper. A child who can spell and form letters but lacks sentence knowledge or vocabulary produces *technically correct but empty work*. Both dimensions must be taught explicitly, sequenced carefully, and given dedicated time.

2. The Curriculum Structure

Writing at Norton Road Primary School is structured around six interlocking strands. Each is non-negotiable. None is optional or moveable when timetable pressures arise.

Strand	Programme	Frequency	Position in the week
Handwriting	Read Write Inc. Handwriting	Daily	Opening 10 minutes of every writing lesson
Spelling	Read Write Inc. Spelling	3 x 15 min	Dedicated spelling slot, separate from writing lessons
Vocabulary	Sunny Vocabulary (NRPS)	Daily	First 5 minutes of every writing lesson
Morphology	Grammarsaurus Flashcards	Daily	First 5 minutes of every writing lesson (consecutive with vocabulary)
Sentence Mastery	Ark Academy Sentence Mastery	Daily	10-15 minute starter, mapped to the current writing project
Composition	Writing for Pleasure - structured choice	Daily	30-35 minutes: main writing time

Strand 1: Handwriting

Programme: Read Write Inc. Handwriting | **Frequency:** Daily, 10 minutes, opening every writing lesson

Automatic letter formation reduces cognitive load and frees working memory for composition. When a pupil is still thinking about how to form a letter, composing ideas is harder. Handwriting is not merged with composition time or shortened when lessons feel pressured.

Strand 2: Spelling

Programme: Read Write Inc. Spelling | **Frequency:** 3 x 15 minutes per week, separate from writing lessons

Spelling insecurity leads to vocabulary avoidance. Pupils who cannot confidently spell challenging words default to simpler ones. A systematic, explicit spelling programme has a direct effect on the ambition and precision of writing. Spelling sessions are separate from writing lessons so that neither is compromised.

Note: In Year 1 and for Year 2 pupils still on the Read Write Inc. phonics programme, spelling is embedded within the phonics session rather than delivered separately.

Strand 3: Vocabulary

Programme: Sunny Vocabulary (NRPS) | **Frequency:** Daily - one new word, first five minutes of every writing lesson

Pupils write with the words they know. Sustained, spaced vocabulary teaching builds the repertoire that makes ambitious writing possible. Daily word teaching is not enrichment - it is the content knowledge that underpins compositional quality.

Strand 4: Morphology

Programme: Grammarsaurus Morphology Flashcards | **Frequency:** Daily - one affix, first five minutes of every writing lesson

Understanding how words are constructed equips pupils to decode unfamiliar vocabulary, improve spelling accuracy, and make deliberate vocabulary choices. Vocabulary and morphology are taught consecutively in the first five to ten minutes of each lesson.

Strand 5: Sentence Mastery

Programme: Ark Academy Sentence Mastery | **Frequency:** Daily - 10 to 15 minute lesson starter

Pupils who do not understand how sentences work cannot write them with precision. The Sentence Mastery starter builds explicit knowledge of sentence construction. Activities are mapped directly to the current writing project - not delivered as a standalone linear programme.

Strand 6: Composition

Approach: Writing for Pleasure - structured choice model | **Frequency:** 30-35 minutes per lesson

Pupils write better when they have something worth saying and someone to say it to. The structured choice model gives pupils a shared genre, purpose, and audience while allowing them to choose their own content and angle. It is purposeful, taught, and carefully sequenced through the writing process: reading as writers, oral composition, drafting, conferencing, revision, and publication.

3. Teaching Approaches

The curriculum strands are taught through a consistent set of pedagogical principles that apply across all year groups and all phases of the writing project. These are not optional additions - they are how the curriculum is delivered.

Gradual Release of Responsibility (I Do, We Do, You Do) (FISHIE)

Every element of writing teaching follows a gradual release of responsibility model: the teacher demonstrates (I do), guides pupils through the task together (we do), and pupils apply independently (you do). This shapes how teaching is sequenced across a lesson, across a project, and across the school.

Within the half-term project, the balance shifts progressively:

Week	Phase	Teacher role in composition time
Week 1	I do	Teacher reads as a writer, thinks aloud, models oral composition. Pupils observe, discuss, and collect ideas.
Week 2	I do / We do	Shared writing: teacher writes alongside pupils, making decisions audibly. Guided composition begins.
Week 3	We do / You do	Conferencing replaces direct modelling. Pupils draft with decreasing support. Teacher works with individuals and focus groups.
Week 4	You do	Pupils revise and publish independently. Teacher conferences only where needed. Modelling is minimal.

Across year groups, the overall balance shifts as pupils become more skilled:

Year group	Balance of modelling to independence
Year 1-2	Heavy modelling and shared composition. Oral composition central. Very short periods of independent writing with structured support. Scaffolds are explicit and deliberate.
Year 3-4	Shared writing reduces. Guided composition and conferencing increase. Pupils draft more independently within the structured choice model. Scaffolds begin to be removed.
Year 5-6	Predominantly independent. Conferencing is the primary support mechanism. Teacher modelling is targeted, brief, and responsive rather than routinely planned.

The over-scaffolding problem: scaffolding that is not progressively removed does not support pupils - it replaces their thinking. Writing frames, word banks, and pre-built planning tools are temporary. When they become permanent fixtures, pupils never develop the independence that writing demands. Every scaffold should have a planned exit point.

Mastery Approach

Every pupil in every year group engages with the same writing project. The curriculum is not differentiated at the level of content or genre. The mastery model operates through four principles:

- Low entry point: all pupils can access the shared genre, purpose, and audience.
- High ceiling: the structured choice model allows pupils to work with vocabulary, sentence structures, and content that reflect their individual level of skill.
- Removing practical barriers: scaffolding targets specific obstacles without replacing the thinking that writing requires.
- High expectations for all: every pupil is a writer. Every pupil publishes.

Real World Application

Every writing project has a genuine purpose and a genuine reader. Publication beyond the classroom is planned into the curriculum, not treated as an occasional extra. Examples include:

- Letters to authors, local businesses, or community figures.
- Books created for younger pupils in the school.
- Contributions to a class or school publication.
- Entries to writing competitions.
- Displays, readings, or presentations to a genuine audience beyond the classroom.

Pupils who know their writing will be read by someone other than their teacher write differently. They revise more carefully, choose words more deliberately, and care about the outcome. Real world application is not enrichment - it is what makes writing purposeful and pupils invested.

Clear Progression

Writing development at Norton Road Primary School is cumulative. Where a genre appears more than once across a pupil's time at school, it is taught at greater depth and complexity - not repeated with the same resources and the same expectations.

Teachers plan from the curriculum, not from banks of pre-existing resources. Where previous lesson materials exist, they may inform planning as a starting point for adaptation. They are not delivered unchanged to a class that has moved on.

Supporting All Pupils

High-quality whole-class teaching is the foundation of provision for all pupils. The DfE Writing Framework (2025) is clear that every pupil, including those with identified SEND, should be fully included in writing instruction. The mastery model - low entry point, high ceiling, targeted scaffolding - is designed to make this possible without reducing expectations for any group.

Pupils with SEND

Teachers work with the SENCO to ensure that provision for pupils with identified SEND is in line with each pupil's EHCP or SEND support plan. The graduated approach (assess, plan, do, review) informs how scaffolding and adaptations are refined over time. For pupils with SEND, teacher-written feedback in books is a recognised and appropriate tool where verbal conferencing alone is not sufficient.

Pupils who find writing more challenging

Pupils who find writing more challenging access the same curriculum and the same writing project as their peers. The response to difficulty is targeted scaffolding that addresses the specific barrier - not reduced content, simplified text types, or separate tasks. Scaffolding is responsive and temporary: it is put in place to address a specific obstacle and removed as soon as that obstacle is overcome. The goal is always independence.

Pupil Premium

Pupil premium pupils at Norton Road Primary School span the full range of attainment and ability. They are not a homogeneous group, and pupil premium funding is not applied to a single approach or programme. The EEF notes that disadvantaged pupils are 20% less likely than their peers to reach expected standards in writing by the end of primary school (EEF, 2021). At NRPS, pupil premium investment targets the specific barriers that prevent individual pupils from achieving their potential: transcription fluency, vocabulary breadth, access to meaningful writing experiences, and engagement with writing as a purposeful act.

The impact of pupil premium investment is measured through value-added data - the progress made by PP pupils relative to their starting points - rather than against fixed attainment benchmarks. High expectations apply equally: PP pupils participate fully in the same curriculum, the same writing projects, and the same publication opportunities as all pupils.

Effective Feedback

Feedback is most effective when it is immediate and acted upon while pupils are still writing. Every writing lesson provides at least one structured feedback opportunity using the school's effective feedback protocol:

Tool	Purpose
Pink highlighter	Marks where the learning objective and success criteria have been met. Used by the pupil in self-assessment, or when the teacher gives verbal feedback during conferencing.
Green highlighter	Marks errors: spelling, punctuation, sentence-level issues. Identified by the pupil during self-assessment, or noted when the teacher gives verbal feedback during conferencing.
Green biro	The pupil's own corrections, made in response to green highlighting. Corrections happen during the lesson - not after it.

Three feedback points are available within each lesson. The minimum expectation is one per lesson:

- Circulating or focus group: targeted teacher feedback given during composition time while pupils are writing.
- Mini plenary: the class pauses mid-lesson, a piece is shared, pupils reflect and respond before continuing.
- End of lesson plenary: pupils self-assess using the pink/green protocol before the lesson closes.

Post-lesson written marking is not the primary feedback mechanism at Norton Road Primary School, provided that pupils' responses to verbal feedback are clear, progressive, and evidenced within their own writing. Where pupils are not engaging accurately or consistently with the effective feedback protocol, the response is explicit modelling, structured support, and follow-up conferencing.

For pupils without identified SEND, teacher-written feedback in pupils' books is reserved for circumstances where verbal conferencing and targeted support have not produced the required response. The quality of verbal feedback is demonstrated through the progression and clarity of pupils' written responses over time - this is what makes verbal feedback visible and accountable.

4. The Lesson Structure

Every writing lesson in Key Stage 2 follows this structure. It is not optional or variable. Planning is built within it, not around it.

Element	Time	Notes
Handwriting (RWI)	10 min	Opens every lesson. Posture, grip, and letter formation taught consistently. Not shortened when lessons feel busy.
Vocabulary + Morphology	5-10 min	One word, one affix. Brief, focused, cumulative. Connected to the current project where possible.
Ark Sentence Mastery	10-15 min	Mapped to the current writing project. Oral first, then written. Not a standalone linear programme.
Composition	30-35 min	Structured around gradual release of responsibility (I do / We do / You do). The balance shifts across the project weeks. See Sections 3 and 5.
Effective feedback	Embedded	At least one feedback opportunity per lesson: circulating/focus group, mini plenary, or end of lesson plenary using the pink/green protocol. See Section 3.

Modified Structures

Year 1 (20 minutes daily)

Year 1 pupils have 20 minutes of dedicated writing time per day, operating alongside continuous provision. The full KS2 structure does not apply.

- 5 minutes: handwriting - letter formation practice connected to current phonics GPCs, not the full RWI video.
- 5 minutes: oral sentence construction - pupils compose a sentence aloud before attempting to write it.
- 10 minutes: writing - the target is one well-formed, correctly punctuated sentence, written independently (once they have built confidence/stamina).

Quality over quantity. One accurate sentence written without support is more valuable than a page produced with heavy scaffolding. The I do / We do / You do balance in Year 1 is heavily weighted toward modelling and oral shared composition.

Year 2 - pupils still on the Read Write Inc. phonics programme (30 minutes daily)

- 5 minutes: handwriting.
- 5 minutes: vocabulary and morphology.
- 5-8 minutes: Sentence Mastery - oral focus.
- 12-15 minutes: composition.

Spelling: embedded within the phonics session for this group, not delivered in a separate slot.

Year 2 - pupils who have graduated from Read Write Inc. phonics (up to 60 minutes daily)

These pupils follow the full KS2 lesson structure. Spelling is delivered in the dedicated 3 x 15 minute weekly slot.

5. The Half-Term Writing Project Arc

Each half term is structured around one main writing project. This is the text type listed first on the year group's Reading and Writing Map for that half term. The class reader or primary reading text provides the initial mentor text; teachers are encouraged to supplement with additional texts and extracts, and pupils should have input into text choices where possible.

The other text types on the map are taught across the second half of the half term at lesson level. Pupils write in these forms but they do not receive the full project treatment. They are shorter, less scaffolded pieces with a clear purpose and audience, without the full drafting and revision cycle. This ensures genuine depth in one form per half term while maintaining breadth across the year.

Note: Pupils write every day, in every lesson, across all project weeks. Handwriting practice, vocabulary and morphology activities, and Sentence Mastery all involve daily written work regardless of where in the project arc the class sits. The descriptions below refer specifically to the composition element of the lesson.

Main Project: Weeks 1-4

Week 1 - Reading as Writers

Pupils encounter the mentor text as writers, not as readers completing comprehension tasks. Discussion focuses on what the author chose to do and why. Pupils write in response to reading throughout this week: collecting vocabulary, annotating structures, and experimenting with short sentences in the style of the text. Oral composition is central - pupils talk through their ideas and begin committing them to paper. This is an active week of writing, not observation.

Week 2 - Beginning to Write

Shared writing with the teacher. The teacher writes alongside pupils, thinking aloud about authorial decisions - modelling the thinking of a writer, not demonstrating a perfect outcome. Pupils begin drafting. Conferencing begins.

Week 3 - Developing and Drafting

Independent drafting continues. The teacher conferences with individuals and small groups. Pupils make their own choices about content, vocabulary, and structure within the shared purpose and audience. The Sentence Mastery starter is mapped to the structures pupils are using in their drafts this week. The effective feedback protocol is applied consistently.

Week 4 - Completing and Publishing

Pupils revise and edit with purpose - improving the effect on the reader. Publication follows: the presentation book (Years 3-6), display, or a genuine external audience where possible. Writing is shared and celebrated. The teacher shares their own published piece alongside pupils where possible.

Secondary Writing: Weeks 5-6

The second text type and poetry from the Reading and Writing Map are taught in shorter, more focused lessons. These pieces are purposeful and have an audience, but they do not go through the full project arc. They are lesson-level pieces for most year groups - pupils encounter the genre, practise key structures, and produce a short piece.

Year 6: Extended Structure

Year 6 requires a greater volume of genuinely independent writing for robust TAF evidence and KS2 assessment preparation. In Year 6, the secondary text type receives a short project treatment across weeks 5 and 6, producing a second properly independent piece each half term. This gives Year 6 pupils up to twelve main and secondary project pieces across the year - sufficient range and independence for TAF assessment across narrative and non-narrative forms.

6. Year Group Expectations

Writing time is protected in every year group. The expectations below are minimum requirements.

Year group	Daily writing time	Lesson structure	Key focus
Year 1	20 minutes	Modified Y1 structure	Oral composition; letter formation connected to phonics; one well-formed sentence per session. Writing connects to continuous provision.
Year 2 (phonics)	30 minutes	Modified Y2 structure	Sentence construction developing; phonics-supported spelling; short purposeful composition.
Year 2 (graduated)	Up to 60 minutes	Full KS2 structure	Full lesson structure; spelling in dedicated slot; composition stamina building.
Year 3	Up to 60 minutes	Full KS2 structure	Establishing the project arc; developing writing stamina; presentation book introduced.
Year 4	Up to 60 minutes	Full KS2 structure	Structured choice with increasing independence; writer identity developing; scaffolds reducing.
Year 5	Up to 60 minutes	Full KS2 structure	Greater compositional independence; wider range of structures; cohesion and revision deepening.
Year 6	Up to 60 minutes	Extended Y6 structure	Two projects per half term; TAF range secured; genuinely independent writing central to provision.

7. EYFS to Year 1 Progression

Children enter Year 1 from an EYFS environment shaped by the Read Write Inc. phonics programme and Drawing Club (Greg Bottrill). Drawing Club develops oral narrative, imaginative composition, and the habit of mark-making as a form of communication. Children arrive with strong oral storytelling skills and, where EYFS teaching has been effective, developing letter formation and phonics-supported early writing.

The Early Learning Goal for Writing requires children to write recognisable letters, some words, and a simple sentence with some punctuation. Year 1 builds on this foundation rather than replacing it.

How Year 1 Builds on Drawing Club

- Drawing remains available as a pre-writing scaffold in the first term, supporting pupils who need to externalise ideas before committing them to text.

- Oral composition is foregrounded: pupils say their sentence aloud, hold it in their heads, and then write it. The movement from oral to written is gradual and deliberate.
- Letter formation is taught explicitly through the RWI handwriting programme, connected directly to the GPCs being learned in phonics.
- Phonics knowledge is applied to spelling in context within writing sessions.
- The target for early Year 1 is one well-formed, correctly punctuated sentence per session, written independently.

Progression Across Year 1

As transcription becomes more automatic across the year, the length and complexity of composition increases. The emphasis in the first term is quality: one accurate sentence is the goal. By the end of Year 1, pupils should write a short sequence of sentences independently, with accurate basic punctuation and phonically plausible spelling.

Year 1 has a dedicated Reading and Writing Map, aligned to the whole-school structure and reflecting the continuous provision context and the modified lesson structure.

8. Assessment

Writing assessment at Norton Road Primary School is evidence-based and purposeful. Its function is to inform teaching. It does not exist to generate data independently of what teachers already know about their pupils.

What We Assess

- The quality of independent writing: pieces produced without scaffolding, from within the writing project arc.
- Transcription skills: spelling and handwriting, monitored through the RWI programmes and reviewed termly.
- Progress over time: assessed termly against the Teacher Assessment Framework descriptors for each year group.

What We Do Not Do

- Mark every piece of lesson output.
- Use cold tasks and hot tasks as the primary assessment mechanism.
- Rely on post-lesson written marking as the main feedback mechanism. Feedback is delivered through in-lesson conferencing and the effective feedback protocol (see Section 3).
- Level individual lessons or lesson-level writing pieces.

Presentation Books (Years 3-6)

From Year 3, every pupil keeps a presentation book. This is where published, independent writing is collected across the year - a clear, chronological record of each pupil's best work across a range of genres and text types.

Presentation books are the primary source of evidence for TAF assessment and moderation. Each entry is dated and the genre noted. The work in a presentation book is the final published version of the project piece the pupil has been drafting and revising throughout the half term - not a separate assessment task. It should reflect the pupil's own revisions and editing decisions, made through the effective feedback process. It is not a clean copy of a teacher-corrected draft; the pupil's growth as a writer should be visible in the work itself.

Moderation

Year group teams moderate together termly using the TAF descriptors, facilitated by the Writing Lead. Judgements are consistent across classes within the same year group. The Writing Lead attends LA moderation and brings national expectations back to inform school practice. Significant divergence between teacher judgements and moderated outcomes is addressed promptly.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

Writing Lead

- Curriculum design and review across Years 1-6.
- Half-term planning templates and exemplar plans: the first half term of 2026-27 is planned in full as a model for all year groups to follow.
- Staff CPD: delivered through shared planning sessions, lesson visits, and moderation.
- School moderation and LA moderation.
- Monitoring writing standards across year groups and providing clear feedback to class teachers.

Class Teachers

- Delivery of the curriculum as designed: lesson structure, strand sequencing, and project arc followed consistently.
- Knowing their pupils as writers: understanding what each pupil is working towards and conferencing accordingly.
- Supplementing the planned mentor texts with additional texts and extracts, and involving pupils in text choices.
- Planning from the curriculum design, not from pre-existing resource banks. Previous materials may inform planning but are adapted, not reused wholesale.
- Honest assessment and reporting of attainment against the TAF descriptors.

Senior Leadership Team

- Timetabling that protects the full writing lesson time across all year groups.
- Resourcing: presentation books, mentor texts, and materials.
- Supporting a positive writing culture across the school day.

References

The following sources inform this curriculum framework:

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