REVISED WRITING FRAMEWORK

Nelson Academy

Purpose: A whole-school framework for teaching writing from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 6, aligned with the DfE Writing Framework (2025) and the National Curriculum for English.

This revised framework brings together the Nelson Academy teaching sequence and the DfE Writing Framework (July 2025). It keeps our practical classroom routines while embedding evidence-based planning, transcription, sentence-level mastery, and drafting strategies.

Progression Across the School

The underlying principles of this framework are suitable for the entire primary age range, but practical implementation varies significantly by year group.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) & Year 1

- Focus on the Basics: The vast majority of time is spent on "Daily Basic Routines"—specifically handwriting and phonics/spelling. Instruction must be daily, explicit, and cumulative.
- Oral Over Written: Phases 1 to 5 are extremely "light-touch" and mostly done out loud. Children should orally compose sentences and practise dictation (e.g., writing single letters, words, or short dictated phrases) rather than independent drafting.
- Developmentally Appropriate Writing: Children should not be required to produce extended writing before their transcription and sentence-construction skills are sufficiently secure. Expectations should respond to pupils' development, with an emphasis on successful oral composition, accurate transcription and increasingly connected sentences.

Year 2

- Transitioning: Children begin to write short, simple narratives (often just a few sentences based on personal experiences or familiar stories).
- Simple Revisions: The writing process is frequently completed at the sentence level. They begin to make simple additions and corrections, often evaluating their writing out loud with the teacher or peers rather than doing heavy independent editing.

Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6)

- The Full Framework: Across Key Stage 2, the full five-phase sequence is applied progressively and flexibly. Teachers select the degree of modelling, support and independence according to pupils' prior learning and readiness.
- Structuring Texts: Children actively use visual templates (Box Plan, Story Mountain, Burger, Temple) to organise ideas logically. They engage in regular drafting stops to manage cognitive load.

- Growing Independence: Children use planning tools to write extended, cohesive texts. They gradually take more responsibility for evaluating their own work and providing structured peer feedback.

The Teaching Sequence for Writing

Based on Raising Boys' Achievements in Writing (UKLA, 2014), adapted in response to the DfE Writing Framework (2025).

Phase	Description
Phase 1a and 1b: Familiarisation with the text type	Read as a reader: response, meaning and impact. Read as a writer: identify and discuss the author's choices and techniques.
Phase 2: Capturing ideas	Activate prior knowledge, gather content, practise sentences orally and use appropriate visual planning models.
Phase 3: Teacher demonstration and scribing	Model planning and drafting through explicit think-alouds, shared writing and planned review stops.
Phases 4 and 5: Supported/independent writing and improvement	Move from guided support to independence. Pupils draft, revise content, edit technical accuracy and share writing with a purposeful audience.

1. Daily Basic Routines (Outside Main Writing Lessons)

- Handwriting and Spelling: Teach handwriting and spelling (including dictation) every day. Ensure correct posture, paper position, and pencil grip. This helps children develop automaticity, freeing up their working memory to focus on ideas during composition.
- Sentence Building: with targeted sentence-combining and clause-expansion activities. Focus on manipulating subjects, adding detail with adverbials, and joining clauses logically. Explicitly use accurate statutory grammatical terminology (e.g., verbs, nouns, adverbials) whilst modelling sentence manipulation, rather than avoiding terminology. Label the clauses and phrases as children combine them. This builds a shared, accurate vocabulary that pupils can then use during their independent "drafting stops" and when providing peer feedback. Focus on function and practical application over decontextualised exercises.
- Quick Writing: Provide low-stakes, everyday incidental writing opportunities (like short diary entries, labelling diagrams, or quick reflections) to build transcription stamina.

2. The Teaching Sequence (Detailed Phases)

Phase 1: Getting to Know the Text & Gathering Ideas

- Get Them Hooked: Use a soundtrack, video, or immerse them in high-quality children's literature to get the class excited and establish a clear audience and purpose.
- Read the text together (linking to guided reading). Discuss the narrative flow, key events, and specifically highlight Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary.
- Tell the story out loud. Model how to use a visual story map to capture and sequence the main events.
- Prioritise high-quality mentor texts (WAGOLLs) so that pupils internalise effective writing structures and authorial choices. Flawed examples may be used sparingly for a precise, teacher-led purpose, such as applying already-taught proofreading or editing knowledge.
- Curate a rich working wall displaying the main themes, key vocabulary, and collected writing features for children to reference.

Phase 2: Planning and Talking it Through (Enhanced DfE Strategies)

- Activate Prior Knowledge & Ensure Topic Familiarity: Ensure pupils write about familiar topics to reduce cognitive load. Give time to research, read around the subject, and discuss links with other subjects (e.g., History/Geography) before planning.
- Pre-Plan Practice: Build targeted vocabulary banks and practise specific sentence structures before writing the plan.
- Prioritise Oral Composition: Children must say their ideas out loud before attempting to write them down. Saying sentences aloud helps formulate ideas and test structures.
- Concrete Goal Setting: Set clear, concrete writing goals (e.g., 'include 3 key reasons with evidence' or 'create suspense using short sentences') to guide planning.
- Visual & Structural Planning Models (DfE Appendix H): Use specific visual scaffolds to structure paragraphs and text flow. Select the model that fits the genre:
- Box Plan: A simple 4-part structure for narratives (Opening, Build up, Problem, Resolution).
- Story Mountain: A detailed 6-part narrative arc (Characters/Setting, Opening, Build up, Problem, Resolution, Ending).
- The Burger Model: Used for paragraphs or whole texts (Top bun = Introduction, Filling = Body paragraphs, Bottom bun = Conclusion).
- The Temple Model: Used for structured non-fiction/argument (Foundation = Introduction, Pillars = Paragraphs 1-4, Roof = Conclusion).
- Plan Review & Feedback: Provide opportunities for pupils to review and adjust their plans based on teacher or peer feedback before drafting begins. Confident writers may choose their own planning method.

Phase 3: Teacher Shows How & Writing Together

- Employ the "I Do, We Do" model. The teacher models planning and drafting, explicitly talking out loud to demonstrate authorial choices and sentence structuring, ensuring statutory grammatical rules and terminology are stated contextually during the think-aloud process.
- Move into shared writing, allowing the class to co-construct the next section of the text together.
- Display this shared writing prominently on the working wall alongside the collected vocabulary.
- Implement "planning stops" and "drafting stops." Pause frequently while writing to refer back to the Box Plan, Story Mountain, Burger, or Temple model, check evidence, and review/improve a single paragraph before moving on.
- Balance feedback to manage teacher workload and maximise immediate impact. Prioritise in-the-moment (live) verbal feedback during "drafting stops" and targeted group interventions over exhaustive daily written marking. Where written marking is used, ensure it is selective, specific, and actionable, providing dedicated time for children to read and respond to it.

Phase 4: Supported and Independent Writing

- Guided release: Some pupils may first write with the teacher in a guided group, using oral frames, sentence stems, partially completed plans or collaborative rehearsal.
- Scaffold withdrawal: Teachers plan how prompts and planning structures will be reduced as pupils become more secure.
- Oral Rehearsal: Children must continue to verbalise their ideas and sentences out loud before writing them down.
- Scaffolded Application: Pupils write individually, practising what they observed during the shared writing phase. They must actively use their visual plans (Burger/Temple models) and the working wall to structure their paragraphs.
- Focus on Flow: Remind pupils that drafting is about translating ideas into text. While handwriting and spelling are important, they are not the primary focus at this stage and should not interrupt the flow of composition.
- Self-Monitoring & Drafting Stops: Teach pupils to use checklists or their concrete writing goals to self-monitor. They should use their own "drafting stops" to check if their writing aligns with their plan before moving to the next paragraph.

- Nelson Spelling Code: Children place 3 dots under words they are unsure how to spell. This perfectly supports the DfE focus on maintaining creative flow, preventing them from getting stuck on transcription during drafting.
- Flexible Pacing: Maintain mastery-driven pacing. Abandon strict timetables (e.g., "1 day to plan, 2 days to write") to allow children the time they need to craft quality paragraphs. Remember QUALITY OVER QUANTITY.

Phase 5: Making it Better, Fixing Mistakes & Sharing

- Revising (Making it better): Treat this as a distinct step focused on content. Encourage children to add precise vocabulary, check sentence variety, and use cohesive devices (like pronouns and conjunctions) to ensure the writing flows well for the reader.
- Editing (Fixing mistakes): Treat editing as a separate, age-appropriate step focused on technical accuracy. This may include spelling (including 3-dotted words), sentence boundaries, capital letters, punctuation and grammatical consistency. Limit the number of editing priorities to avoid cognitive overload.
- Sharing: Provide a purposeful conclusion by letting the children present their finished writing to the intended audience, reinforcing the value of their work.

3. Assessment and Progression

Assessment is integral to the teaching sequence. It should identify what pupils can do securely, reveal the next barrier to progress and inform subsequent teaching. It should not become a separate test-driven activity.

- Use oral responses, sentence-level work, dictation, shared writing, drafting stops and independent outcomes as formative evidence.
- Give immediate feedback where it can affect the writing being produced; use written feedback selectively where it adds value.
- Assess independent writing across a range of audiences, purposes and forms, not from a single heavily scaffolded outcome.
- Distinguish transcription barriers from composition barriers so that support targets the actual need.
- Use year-group curriculum expectations, the National Curriculum and relevant statutory teacher-assessment frameworks to inform judgements.
- Moderate writing within and across year groups using agreed exemplification and a shared understanding of independence.
- Avoid excessive test preparation or checklists that encourage pupils to insert features without regard to meaning or effect.

Evidence principle: The strongest evidence shows that a pupil can apply taught knowledge independently and appropriately in a new but sufficiently familiar context.

4. Adaptive Teaching and Additional Support

Teachers identify pupils who need additional support as early as possible and adapt teaching without lowering the ambition of the curriculum. Adaptation should increase access, practice and success while preserving rich content, vocabulary and purposeful communication.

- Check whether the principal barrier is oral language, vocabulary, phonics/spelling, handwriting, sentence construction, working memory, organisation of ideas or confidence.
- Break complex tasks into smaller instructional steps and provide additional cumulative practice.
- Increase oral rehearsal, teacher modelling, guided writing and opportunities to rehearse with a partner before transcription.
- Use sentence stems, visual prompts, vocabulary banks, partially completed plans and worked examples where these directly address the identified barrier.

- Reduce unnecessary copying and transcription demands while continuing to teach handwriting and spelling explicitly.
- Provide extra time, shorter but successful writing episodes and frequent opportunities to revisit prior learning.
- Use assistive technology or alternative recording methods where appropriate, while continuing to develop pupils' writing knowledge and independence.
- Plan how scaffolds will be gradually withdrawn; a scaffold is successful when it enables pupils to do more independently over time.
- Provide additional targeted intervention that complements, rather than replaces, access to high-quality classroom teaching.

Expected adaptation by phase

Phase	Examples of responsive support
Familiarisation	Pre-teach vocabulary; use accessible high-quality texts; add images, objects, drama and repeated oral retelling.
Capturing ideas	Provide structured talk, visual prompts, sentence rehearsal and a reduced-choice planning frame.
Teacher modelling	Model one decision at a time; use worked examples; make hidden thinking explicit and revisit prior examples.
Supported/independent writing	Use guided groups, prompts and drafting stops; allow appropriate technology; remove scaffolds as security increases.
Revising and editing	Limit the focus; use colour coding or read-aloud strategies; separate content revision from technical proofreading.

5. Year-by-Year Curriculum Progression

This framework describes the agreed pedagogy. It must be used alongside the school's year-by-year progression documents, which specify the knowledge pupils are taught and expected to apply.

- Handwriting fluency, letter formation and presentation.
- Phonics, spelling patterns, morphology and statutory word expectations.
- Sentence construction, grammar and punctuation.
- Vocabulary development and control of Standard English.
- Text organisation, paragraphing and cohesion.
- Planning, drafting, revising, editing and proofreading.
- Writing for a range of audiences, purposes and forms.
- Progression from oral composition and supported application to sustained independence.

Progression principles

See Progression Across the School, above, for how expectations shift by phase. Whatever the phase, progress is not defined by length alone: accuracy, clarity, control, coherence and increasing independence are the more informative indicators.

6. Leadership, Implementation and Monitoring

Leaders establish a positive writing culture, maintain a well-sequenced curriculum and ensure that staff have the subject knowledge and resources needed to teach writing effectively.

Whole-school non-negotiables

- Daily, explicit and cumulative teaching of handwriting and spelling, calibrated to year-group expectations and pupil need.

- Regular sentence instruction that integrates accurate grammatical terminology with purposeful sentence manipulation.
- Oral composition and rehearsal before and during writing.
- High-quality mentor texts and explicit attention to vocabulary, audience and purpose.
- A gradual release from teacher modelling to shared, guided and independent application.
- A clear distinction between revising content and editing technical accuracy.
- Feedback that is timely and useful without creating excessive written-marking workload.
- Adaptive teaching based on identified barriers, with ambitious expectations for all pupils.

Professional flexibility

The framework is not a fixed timetable. Teachers vary the length of phases, the planning model, the amount of modelling and the level of support in response to the curriculum content and pupils' readiness. Not every unit requires every routine in equal depth.

Monitoring and professional development

- Provide staff development in transcription, sentence instruction, modelling, adaptive teaching and assessment.
- Use planning review, lesson visits, work scrutiny and pupil discussion to evaluate curriculum impact, not surface compliance.
- Check whether pupils remember and independently apply what has been taught across subjects and over time.
- Use monitoring findings to identify subject-knowledge needs and improve curriculum sequencing.
- Review this framework alongside progression documents, assessment guidance and workload expectations at agreed intervals.

Appendix 1: Summary of Key Pedagogical Enhancements

This section serves as a quick reference guide summarising the key updates integrated into the framework to align with current DfE guidance, statutory National Curriculum requirements, and workload considerations.

- Contextual Grammar Instruction: Grammatical terminology (verbs, nouns, adverbials) is explicitly taught and labelled during sentence manipulation, ensuring statutory compliance without relying on decontextualized worksheets.
- Topic Familiarity: Writing about familiar or thoroughly researched topics reduces cognitive load.
- Pre-Planning Practice: Sentence structures and vocabulary banks are practised before plans are drawn up.
- Goal Setting: Concrete goals guide paragraph intent before drafting begins.
- Continuous Planning: Incorporating planning stops during drafting keeps the writing aligned with its original visual model.
- Sustainable Marking: A shift toward live, verbal feedback and targeted interventions reduces excessive written marking while improving immediate impact on pupil progress.

Appendix 2: DfE 2025 Visual Planning Models

Descriptions of the visual planning models recreated from the DfE Writing Framework (2025) Appendix H to support structured paragraphing and whole-text planning.

Hamburger Paragraph Writing

Layer	Function
Topic Sentence (Top Bun)	Introduces the paragraph's main idea.
Supporting Sentence 1 (Tomato)	Develops a specific idea related to the topic sentence.

Layer	Function
Supporting Sentence 2 (Lettuce)	Adds facts, evidence or carefully selected detail.
Supporting Sentence 3 (Filling)	Elaborates, explains or exemplifies another relevant point.
Concluding Sentence (Bottom Bun)	Returns to the main idea and gives the paragraph a purposeful close.

Box Plan

Section	Guiding questions
Opening	Where and when does the story begin? Who are the characters?
Build-up	What happens as the situation develops?
Problem	What changes or goes wrong?
Resolution	How is the problem addressed or resolved?

Appendix 3: Glossary

Adaptive teaching: Responsive teaching that maintains ambitious goals while adjusting instruction, scaffolds, practice and resources to address identified barriers.

Drafting stop: A planned pause during composition to reread, check alignment with the plan or goal, and improve a manageable section before continuing.

Independent writing: Writing in which the pupil makes the substantive compositional choices and applies taught knowledge without adult transformation of the outcome.

Mentor text / WAGOLL: A high-quality example selected to help pupils notice and discuss how writers achieve particular effects.

Nelson Spelling Code: Three dots placed beneath a word whose spelling is uncertain, allowing the pupil to maintain compositional flow and return to it during editing.

Planning stop: A pause to revisit, refine or reorganise a plan before or during drafting.

Revising: Improving meaning, content, organisation, vocabulary, sentence choice or effect.

Editing: Correcting technical accuracy, including spelling, grammar, punctuation and sentence boundaries.

Transcription: The physical and technical processes of handwriting or keyboarding and spelling.

References

Department for Education (2025), The Writing Framework.

Department for Education, National Curriculum in England: English programmes of study.
UKLA (2014), Raising Boys' Achievements in Writing.