



## Rationale for writing at Curnow School.

### School Context

Curnow school is a 2-19 specialist provision for students with special educational needs. We have two learning pathways within school. Our curriculum is divided into the Learning to Learn and Ready to Learn strands, the EYFS curriculum and the Post 16 curriculum. Our Learning to Learn pupils are assessed using annual EHCP outcomes broken down into termly targets. The engagement model looks at how the children learn. Our ready to learn pupils follow a curriculum based on the national curriculum, split into the core subjects (including English), the creative curriculum and understanding the world. At Curnow we are proud of the levels of engagement in the classroom which is supported by teacher's knowledge of how to plan a highly individualised timetable which takes into account pupil's interests and learning styles.

### Intent

***Writing is how we express ourselves. For anyone with complex communication needs, it is the ultimate goal. Being able to write means that you can say anything you want.***

***Jane Farrall Consulting January 14<sup>th</sup> 2021***

We aim to support our learners to become as independent readers and writers as they are able. Our English curriculum recognises writing both as a form of communication and as a source of pleasure and support for wellbeing. Our curriculum equips our students with the skills and the knowledge needed to enable them to use their writing skills functionally and recreationally in life beyond school. We reflect the modern world by widening our focus beyond handwriting, developing technical skills and the use of individual communication materials in the teaching of writing, in school we call this the use of 'alternative writing tools' or 'alternative pencils'. This also allows those with physical limitations to become writers. As our young people progress through the school we prepare them to access the written word in the wider world to foster their independence skills.

### Implementation

Using the evidence based practice outlined in ***Comprehensive Literacy for All***, Teaching Students with Significant Disabilities to Read and Write, (Karen A Ericson and David A Koppenhaver), students within the Ready to Learn strand are assessed as either emergent or conventional literacy learners. The following diagrams outline the assessment of this along with the school offer for each strand:

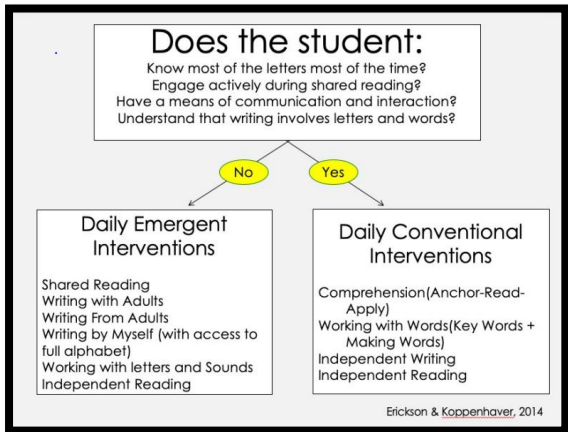


Table 1 – literacy strands

## Comprehensive Literacy for ALL Students

Emergent Readers and Writers

Conventional Readers and Writers

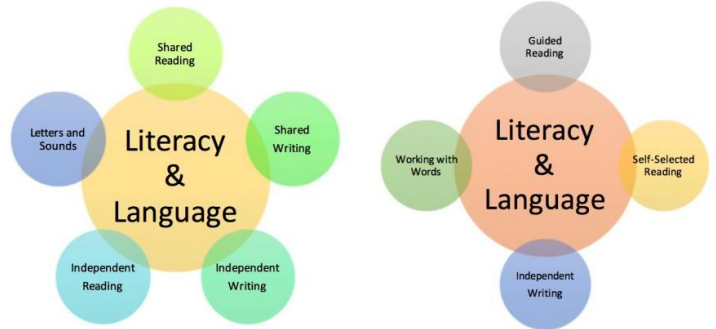


Table 2 – school offer for emergent and conventional learners

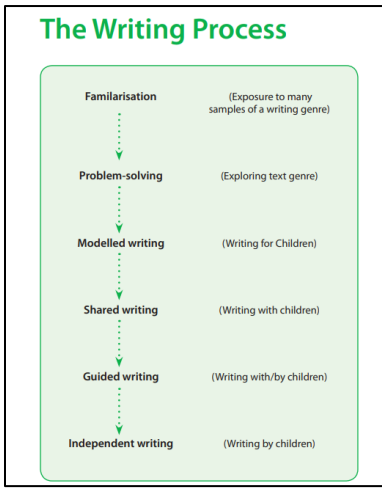
Phonics and reading teaching is linked closely to our writing offer, as is our communication teaching. During daily phonics teaching students learn to form letters and link these to their sound, moving from writing individual sounds to forming words. Daily instruction also allows access to alternative writing tools for those students with physical challenges and also as a way to reduce cognitive load while teaching writing. Students are supported within their handwriting journey from mark making through to letter formation by the use of consistent teaching methods and terminology, using early handwriting patterns and the read, write, inc letter formation rhymes. Upper and lower case letters and letter sounds and names are taught concurrently.

The range of writing genre taught focusses mainly on functional writing as we recognise that for the vast majority of our students this will be the main purpose for writing beyond school. A rolling plan between the following units of work dictate the focus for teaching each half term, to include:

- Writing to request
- Writing to inform
- Writing for pleasure



Units are fully adapted to meet the range of learning needs across the school, there is a strong emphasis on the power of modelling when learning about the written word in its many forms.



Regular staff training and lesson observations/learning walks support us to ensure consistent high quality teaching and to address any inconsistencies early by providing extra support and guidance. Staff CPD is planned in accordance with literacy developments and work/progress scrutiny to ensure that teaching teams are well informed in how to deliver and assess high quality provision.

### **Impact - Assessment of outcomes**

Evidence for learning is used to track progress in handwriting against the bespoke handwriting framework and the Punctuation and Grammar framework written by the Special Partnership Trust. Evidence for Learning and workbook scrutiny provide the basis of quality assurance/moderation in house and trust wide to ensure that standards are measured consistently and planning and assessment show a clear sequence of learning in this subject. Teachers meet with the English lead to discuss any students who are not reaching the expected standards in any area of the curriculum and this forms the basis of an action plan to address any requirements for intervention/support.