



## Orrets Meadow Writing Steps

The Pre-Curriculum Writing Steps provide a developmental pathway towards the National Curriculum and formal written communication. They are designed to recognise and value the wide range of early literacy development seen within our pupils, including those working significantly below age-related expectations or not yet ready for formal phonics and writing instruction.

The progression is developmental rather than age-based. Each step reflects the typical sequence through which children develop communication, composition and transcription skills, beginning with interaction, shared attention and sensory exploration before moving towards intentional communication, oral composition, mark making and early independent writing.

The steps are intended to act as a bridge into the National Curriculum by breaking early writing development into smaller, meaningful stages. This allows staff to identify and celebrate small but significant achievements that may not be captured within formal curriculum objectives alone.

The developmental journey headings are included to help clarify the main focus of each stage. While some statements between steps may appear similar, the key progression is often seen through:

- increasing intentionality,
- growing independence,
- movement from oral to recorded communication,
- and increasing control over the communication of meaning.

The progression should be viewed as fluid rather than strictly linear. Pupils may demonstrate aspects of different steps simultaneously depending on context, communication profile and level of support.

<b>Step</b>	<b>Developmental Fpocus</b>	<b>Main Focus</b>
Step 1	<b>Sensory Engagement &amp; Shared Interaction</b>	Responding, noticing, shared attention, cause/effect.
Step 2	<b>Intentional Communication &amp; Exploration</b>	Purposeful interaction, early pretend play, intentional mark making.
Step 3	<b>Representing Meaning</b>	Giving meaning through talk, play, symbols and marks.
Step 4	<b>Building Spoken Structures</b>	Constructing simple oral sentences and linking ideas together.
Step 5	<b>Oral Composition &amp; Early Recording</b>	Verbally composing ideas and beginning to record them.
Step 6	<b>Emergent Writing &amp; Transcription</b>	Recording simple ideas using developing phonics and sentence structures.
Step 7	<b>Early Independent Written Communication</b>	Writing simple connected ideas that can increasingly be read by others.

Spoken language development will often exceed recorded written outcomes during early literacy development. Pupils may demonstrate ideas orally before they are able to record them independently.

		<b><u>Composition</u></b>	<b><u>Transcription</u></b>
<b><u>Step 1</u></b>	<b><u>Interaction</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engages in shared experiences that support early communication, such as sensory play, songs and interaction with familiar adults.</li> <li>- Reacts to familiar people, objects or events during shared experiences. Shows awareness that actions or behaviours can have an effect (early cause and effect).</li> <li>- Participates in shared attention with an adult, for example looking at or engaging with the same object.</li> <li>- Begins to respond to familiar routines, songs or repeated experiences.</li> <li>- Expresses preferences through actions, movement or vocalisation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explores mark making through movement, for example using hands, fingers or whole-body actions.</li> <li>- Makes marks on different surfaces using a range of materials such as paint, sand or foam.</li> <li>- Shows awareness that marks can be made through their actions.</li> <li>- Engages in sensory exploration that supports early fine motor development.</li> <li>- Begins to develop hand and arm control through large movements.</li> <li>- Tolerates and engages with different textures and materials.</li> </ul>
<b><u>Step 2</u></b>	<b><u>Communication</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Begins to communicate intentionally through sounds, gestures, eye contact or movement.</li> <li>- Uses actions or early vocalisations to express needs, wants or preferences.</li> <li>- Participates in familiar routines and anticipates what might happen next.</li> <li>- Engages in simple pretend play, such as feeding a doll or pushing a car.</li> <li>- Shows enjoyment in shared storytelling experiences, such as looking at books, photos or listening to rhymes.</li> <li>- Begins to represent familiar experiences through play or interaction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explores mark making across a range of materials, surfaces and tools.</li> <li>- Makes marks intentionally using a range of tools such as crayons, chalk or fingers.</li> <li>- Explores different ways of making marks, such as dots, lines or circular movements.</li> <li>- Engages in activities that support hand strength, such as squeezing, pulling or pressing.</li> <li>- Develops increasing hand and finger control through activities that support early mark making.</li> <li>- Begins to develop control over mark making tools.</li> <li>- Holds mark making tools with emerging control.</li> <li>- Shows interest in the marks they make.</li> </ul>

<b><u>Step 3</u></b>	<b><u>Representation</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Uses words, sounds or symbols to represent familiar people, objects or experiences.</li> <li>- Begins to give meaning to marks they make.</li> <li>- Engages in simple retelling of familiar events through play, talk or interaction.</li> <li>- Uses talk, gesture or symbols alongside play to communicate meaning.</li> <li>- Imitates words, phrases or actions linked to stories or experiences.</li> <li>- Begins to link ideas to familiar experiences, such as recounting something that has happened.</li> <li>- Begins to communicate simple ideas about what they are doing or have done.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Holds a mark making tool with increasing control.</li> <li>- Makes a range of marks, including lines, circles and simple shapes.</li> <li>- Begins to control the direction of marks.</li> <li>- Begins to use marks to represent meaning.</li> <li>- Shows an interest in writing tools and writing activities.</li> <li>- Begins to distinguish between drawing and writing.</li> <li>- Engages in activities that develop fine motor control.</li> </ul>
<b><u>Step 4</u></b>	<b><u>Oral Structure</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Uses words, phrases or symbols to communicate ideas about familiar experiences.</li> <li>- Begins to organise ideas during play or talk, for example sequencing simple events.</li> <li>- Engages in shared storytelling, joining in with familiar phrases or repeated parts of stories.</li> <li>- Can identify who or what a sentence is about in a picture, e.g. the cat, the boy (early subject awareness – terminology not required).</li> <li>- Can discuss what is happening in a picture with an adult, e.g. kicking a ball, eating (early action awareness – terminology not required).</li> <li>- Begins to combine who and what is happening, e.g. the boy is running.</li> <li>- Begins to construct simple sentences orally.</li> <li>- Uses drawings, marks or symbols to represent meaning.</li> <li>- Participates in role play linked to stories or real-life experiences.</li> <li>- Begins to pause and think before speaking or communicating ideas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Uses a preferred hand to hold a writing tool with increasing control.</li> <li>- Begins to use a more refined grip when holding writing tools.</li> <li>- Makes recognisable shapes and letter-like forms.</li> <li>- Begins to form some letters from their name or familiar words.</li> <li>- Writes some letters or symbols that resemble known letters.</li> <li>- Begins to use a left to right direction when making marks.</li> </ul>

<b><u>Step 5</u></b>	<b><u>Composition</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Makes up stories, play scenarios and drawings in response to experiences, such as outings.</li> <li>- Invents, adapts and recounts narratives and stories with their peers and teacher.</li> <li>- Develops more complex stories using small world equipment or role play.</li> <li>- Can identify who, what is happening and what is involved in a picture, e.g. the boy is kicking the ball.</li> <li>- Uses talk to build simple sentences describing events, actions or pictures.</li> <li>- Begins to extend ideas, e.g. the dog is running fast.</li> <li>- Uses simple sentence structures during play and storytelling.</li> <li>- Organises words to communicate meaning, including simple sentences.</li> <li>- Gives meaning to drawings, marks or symbols.</li> <li>- Ascribes meaning to signs, symbols and words they see in different places.</li> <li>- Uses talk to organise, sequence and clarify ideas.</li> <li>- Begins to hold a short sequence of ideas when speaking.</li> <li>- Begins to orally rehearse simple sentences before expressing them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Holds a pencil with a controlled grip.</li> <li>- Forms recognisable letters, including some from their name.</li> <li>- Begins to form lower-case letters correctly.</li> <li>- Writes their name with increasing accuracy.</li> <li>- Begins to use a consistent directionality in writing.</li> <li>- Begins to segment simple words into sounds when attempting to write (segmenting – terminology not required).</li> <li>- Uses their phonic knowledge to write some simple words.</li> <li>- Makes phonetically plausible attempts at words.</li> <li>- Begins to represent each sound in a simple word with a letter.</li> <li>- Begins to use spaces between words, although this may not be consistent.</li> <li>- Begins to place writing on a line.</li> </ul>
<b><u>Step 6</u></b>	<b><u>Transcription</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enjoys creating texts to communicate meaning for an increasingly wide range of purposes, such as making greetings cards, tickets, lists and invitations.</li> <li>- Creates their own stories and books with images and sometimes words.</li> <li>- Uses who + what doing + what in simple sentences.</li> <li>- Begins to extend sentences with additional detail.</li> <li>- Orally rehearses sentences before writing.</li> <li>- Uses structured sentences when talking about stories or experiences.</li> <li>- Writes labels, captions or short pieces to communicate meaning.</li> <li>- Selects and organises words to construct simple sentences.</li> <li>- Selects and organises words with support to compose increasingly detailed sentences.</li> <li>- Begins to sequence ideas across more than one sentence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Holds a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing.</li> <li>- Forms lower-case letters correctly and with increasing consistency.</li> <li>- Begins to form some capital letters.</li> <li>- Writes words using known letter-sound correspondences.</li> <li>- Segments spoken words into sounds to support spelling.</li> <li>- Writes simple words and captions that can be read by others.</li> <li>- Uses spaces between words, although not always consistently.</li> <li>- Begins to use simple punctuation, such as a full stop or capital letter, with support.</li> <li>- Writes on a line with increasing control.</li> </ul>

<b>Step 7</b>	<b>Independent Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Begins to write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others, with support.</li> <li>- Begins to identify the start and end of a sentence, with adult guidance.</li> <li>- Re-reads writing to check that it makes sense, with support where needed.</li> <li>- Begins to use who + what doing + what structure in writing, with support.</li> <li>- Begins to add simple detail to sentences.</li> <li>- Orally rehearses sentences before writing, with prompting.</li> <li>- Begins to write for simple purposes, such as messages, captions or short recounts, with support.</li> <li>- Begins to sequence ideas across more than one sentence, with adult support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Forms some lower-case letters correctly and begins to form capital letters.</li> <li>- Begins to use spaces between words, although this is not yet consistent.</li> <li>- Uses developing phonic knowledge to attempt to spell words.</li> <li>- Begins to segment words into sounds when writing, with support.</li> <li>- Makes phonetically plausible attempts at words.</li> <li>- Begins to use capital letters and full stops, with adult support.</li> <li>- Writes simple words and phrases that can be read by others, with support.</li> <li>- Shows increasing control of letter formation, though this is not yet consistent.</li> </ul>
---------------	----------------------------------	--	--

Pupils at Step 7 may still rely heavily on oral rehearsal, adult modelling and supported transcription. Movement into Year 1 objectives reflects increasing independence in sentence construction, phonics application and written communication.