



Handwriting Policy

Person responsible: English Subject Leader

Date adopted: October 2016

Review Date: October 2019

Handwriting policy

'Handwriting is a means of expressing language just like speech. It is a physical way of expressing thoughts and ideas and a means of communicating with others.'

National Handwriting Association, 2015

Aims

- To develop a comfortable and appropriate pencil grip.
- To be supported in developing correct spelling quickly through a multi-sensory approach to handwriting.
- To be able to write with an efficient pace to aid expressing themselves across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.
- To understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly.
- To take pride in the presentation of their work and therefore study handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement.
- To develop a fluent, joined handwriting style.

Pupil Expectations

Early Years Foundation Stage:

- Develop gross and fine motor skills.
- Hold a pencil correctly to form recognisable letters.

'Children show good control and coordination in large and small movements. They handle equipment and tool effectively including pencils for writing' **DFE Early Learning and Childcare Guidance 2014**

Year 1:

- Use a comfortable and efficient pencil grip.
- Form most letters correctly orientated.

'Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently.' **The National Curriculum in England.**

Year 2:

- Write legibly using upper and lower case letters appropriately.
- Begin to join letters.

Pupils 'should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.' **The National Curriculum in England.**

Year 3:

- Write legibly using upper and lower case letters consistently.
- Continue to use joined letters more frequently when writing in different curriculum areas.
- Introduce opportunities for writing with a pen.

Pupils should 'use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined'

The National Curriculum in England.

Year 4:

- Begin to slope some of their writing.
- Be aware of the size, proportion and spacing when writing.
- Develop speed and fluency when writing.

Pupils should 'increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, e.g. by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch' **The National Curriculum in England.**

Year 5/6:

- To develop their own preferred writing style.
- Adapt the writing style used for different writing tasks.
- To write with efficient speed.

Pupils 'write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:

- choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding, as part of their personal style, whether or not to join specific letters
- choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.' **The National Curriculum in England.**

Teaching and Learning

As a school we use the Penpals handwriting scheme. It focuses on whole class teaching with a sequence of warm up (fine and gross motor skills), demonstration, practise and cool down. Formal handwriting sessions are completed in handwriting books.

Early Years Foundation Stage:

- Retrace vertical lines and letter patterns
- Printing letters (starting at the top of letters)
- Letter families (long ladder, one armed robot, curly caterpillar, zig-zag monster)
- See appendix A for activities used for child initiated play.

Year 1:

- Letter families (long ladder, one armed robot, curly caterpillar, zig-zag monster)
- Vowels
- Capital letters
- Diagonal joins - *ng, ch, tr*
- Horizontal joins – *op, oa, ol, of*

Year 2:

- Diagonal joins – *eel, ice*

- Horizontal joins – *oy, ow*
- Joining to and from r (*where*), s (*cheese*), f (*leafy*)
- Joins rr (*hurried*), ss (*session*), ff (*different*)
- Joining high frequency words

Year 3:

- Revising joins in a word – *le, ing, un, de, qu*
- Revising joins in high frequency words
- Revising joins to and from s (*dis*), r (*pre*), f (*ff*)
- Introduce joining p (*pie, panda, phonics*) and b (*bike, band, bland*)
- Relative size and consistency
- Speed and fluency practice
- Consistency in spacing
- Handwriting style

Year 4:

- Revising joins in a word – *ness, ing, mm, ll, ff, dd*
- Link spelling and handwriting using related words
- Introduce sloped writing
- Look at the size, proportion and spacing – *ious, able, ful, ion, ist*
- Speed and fluency when writing notes, drafting and lists
- Look at print (alphabet, capitals)
- Presentation skills (font styles)

Year 5/6:

- Revise joins and sloped writing
- Develop style for speed – joining from *t, f, s* and loops from *g, j, y*
- Develop style for speed – breaks in longer words
- Different styles for different purposes
- Project work: making notes, organising ideas, drafts, evaluating, letters, structuring an argument
- Self-assessment: handwriting, joins, consistent size, ascenders and descenders, capital letters and letters resting on baseline.
- Writing at speed: spacing within and between words, identifying closing and unclosed letters.
- Project work: collecting information, recording ideas, draft, playscript, evaluations, organising information, publish a notice.

The literacy books that children use are differentiated by line sizes through the phases.

Inclusion

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently, however some pupils need more support and provision will be made for this through interventions, extra handwriting practise, gross and fine motor control sessions (see appendix A), pencil grip for support and access to extra resources. Other areas that could be considered are posture, lighting, angle of paper etc.

All teachers are aware of specific needs of **left-handed pupils** and will make appropriate provision:

- Paper should be positioned in the middle allowing pupils to choose their preferred writing position.
- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right handed pupil so that they are not competing for space.
- When possible members of staff will demonstrate for left handed pupils.

The learning environment

In all classes suitable writing materials are available for pupils to access independently supporting progression through each phase. All classes provide opportunities for pupils to practise their handwriting skills during their free time e.g. role-play area, soft start, choosing time etc.

The role of parents and carers

Parents receive an induction pack when children join the school. There is also an induction session at the beginning of the school year for the parents who have children in reception. Curriculum transition meetings are held at the beginning of each school year for all parents. Teachers model writing expectations to parents and correct letter formation.

ICT

The growth in the use of word processing and desktop publishing has increased pupils' awareness of the importance of presentation and the variety of handwriting styles available. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate a range of fonts and to select whatever is appropriate to suit particular purposes.

Presentation

Teachers discuss handwriting and presentation in all subjects and model good handwriting themselves. Teachers are **explicit** about different types of handwriting for example, personal note-taking or best handwriting for presentation, but remember not all the children will be able to achieve this. Teachers give handwriting and presentation a high priority in appropriate classroom displays. The use of a rubber is used at the teacher's discretion otherwise pupils are encouraged to indicate mistakes with one neat horizontal line.

Writing on the interactive white board/white boards

Accurate handwriting while using technology needs to be as neat and legible as it would be written on paper. Tips to support this:

- Change the thickness of the pen and stylus.
- Be aware of different writing colours used, for example red can be difficult to read from a distance.
- Stand to the side of the board to ensure all pupils can see how to appropriately form letters/words.
- Use appropriate templates, i.e. lined and square paper, to help guide your handwriting and offer a better model.

Assessment and Recording

Teachers will assess handwriting each half term on lined paper. Each class will decide on a sentence that will be written each half term allowing them the opportunity to assess their own progress with their handwriting. Teachers aim to ensure that when marking written work comments given about the presentation are kept in proportion with those about the content and meaning.

Review:

Autumn Term 2019

Appendix A

Gross Motor Control is the term used to describe the development of controlled movements of the whole body or limbs such as arms. In relation to handwriting these activities will support good posture and balance:

- Dancing and skipping
- Running and jumping to music
- Use of small apparatus e.g. rolling, bouncing, kicking
- Cycling
- Gripping climbing frames
- Building with large construction kits
- Hammering
- Making large movements in the air with hands, arms and shoulders with dance ribbons, use music

Fine Motor Control is the term used to describe small movements usually of the hands and fingers. In relation to handwriting these activities will support their pencil grip and pencil movement:

- Folding paper
- Cutting out shapes from paper and card
- Fitting things into frames like geometric shapes
- Model making
- Building and stacking bricks
- Screw toys and wood working tools
- Pegboards
- Modelling with play-dough, plasticene and clay
- Drawing in sand and water including sieving, pouring and picking up toys using tools e.g. fishing rods
- Sewing and weaving
- Chopping and peeling when cooking
- Developing the pincer movement by using tweezers to pick up sequins, beads and feathers, sparkling glitter, sand and salt
- Scribbling and drawing with chalk, dry wipe pens, felt tip pens and paints on small, large boards and on small and large paper
- Playing with tactile and magnetic letters
- Puzzles
- Games and miming involving finger and wrist movement e.g. finger puppets
- Use increasingly finer tools to make patterns of lines

General Classroom Resources

- Pencils (different sizes)
- Pencil grips
- Paper and books
- Jolly Phonics
- Penpals