

Handwriting Policy



"Handwriting is a tool that has to work. It must be comfortable, fast and legible." Angela Webb, Chair, National Handwriting Association

Aims

As a school our aims in teaching handwriting are that the pupils will:

- Experience coherence and continuity in learning and teaching across the School
- Develop a recognition and appreciation of pattern and line
- Understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly
- Take pride in the presentation of their work and therefore study handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement.
- Be supported in developing correct spelling quickly through a multi-sensory approach to handwriting
- Be able to write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.
- Use their skills with confidence in real life situations.
- Develop a fluent, joined handwriting style by Year Two.

Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

Reception	Ensure that pupils have good control and co-ordination in small movements. Pupils should be taught to handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing.
Year 1	Pupils should be taught to: sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place form capital letters form digits 0-9 understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these. Children should join when ready.
Year 2	Ensure that pupils revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. Pupils should be taught to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• write with a joined style as soon as they can securely form letters with the correct orientation.• form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another• start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters• and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best

	<p>left unjoined</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship • to one another and to lower case letters • to use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.
Year 3	<p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <p>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 increase the legibility 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.</p>
Year 4	<p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <p>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 increase the legibility 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.</p>
Year 5	<p>Pupils should:</p> <p>write legibly, fluently, with increasing speed and personal style by: a. 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 b. choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task (e.g. quick notes, letters).</p>
Year 6	<p>Pupils should:</p> <p>write legibly, fluently, with increasing speed and personal style by: a. 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 b. choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task (e.g. quick notes, letters).</p>

Handwriting is part of English, a National Curriculum core subject and is one of the 12 strands of learning in the Primary Framework for Literacy. Learning objectives for handwriting appear in strand 12, Presentation.

Teaching handwriting in the Foundation Stage will follow **QCA Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage** (DFEE 2000), **Developing Early Writing** (DFEE 2001) Section 3 Developing handwriting and **Letters and Sounds** (DFES 2007)

Teaching handwriting in Key Stage 1 will follow the **Primary Framework for Literacy** (DFES 2007), **Developing Early Writing** (DFEE 2001) Section 3 Developing handwriting and **Letters and Sounds** (DFES 2007)

Teaching and Learning

We teach handwriting as a specific skill rather than as an independent task (which can often reinforce poor formation having a reverse effect than the intended outcome). Little and often is the most successful way - at least 15 minutes 3 times a week is ideal with additional, independent practise.

Basic structure of a handwriting session:

- Relaxation
 - Posture check, feet flat on the floor, back touching the chair (page 160 **Developing Early Writing**)
 - Teacher modelling
 - Children practising independently with teacher model, then from memory
- Sessions should be fun, varied and multi-sensory, using Write Dance materials.
Books are to be used and whiteboards and pens are to be part of practise.

Letter Formation and Terminology

Teachers will use agreed teaching terminology, to include the following:

Rockin' Round Letters: a d g q c

The Rockin' Round letters are a group of letters that are formed using the same basic steps as the letter a

Loopy Letters: e l h k b f j

The Loopy letters are a group of letters that are formed using the same basic steps as the letter e.

Climb 'n' Slide Letters: i u w t

The Climb 'n' Slide letters are a group of letters that are formed using the same basic steps as the letter i.

Lumpy Letters: n m v x

The Lumpy letters are a group of letters that are formed using the same basic steps as the letter n.

Mix 'n' Match: p r s o y z

The Mix 'n' Match letters have mixed attributes of two or more of the other categories.

The following rhymes should be used to support children in developing the cursive style:

'If you start from the line, you'll feel just fine.'

'Start at the top, we'll tell you to stop.'

'Make sure it's not a lonely letter.'

Cursive Letter Formation will be taught as follows:

Key Stage 1:

Anticlockwise movements-developed from the basic letter 'c'

c whoosh and curl around the caterpillar

o whoosh all around the orange and hook

a whoosh around the apple and down the leaf-hook

d whoosh round the dinosaur's bottom up to his head and down to his feet

g whoosh round her face, down her hair and give her a curl

q whoosh round the queen's head, up to her crown, down her hair and flick

S whoosh up the slide down the snake and hook

f whoosh up the beanstalk, climb down then draw a leaf

e whoosh and slice into the egg, go over the top and under the egg

u whoosh up first then down the umbrella up to the top, down into a puddle then hook

y whoosh down a horn, up a horn and under the yak's head

Down, up and over movements-Developed from the basic letter 'h'

r whoosh slide down the robot's body, up and over his arm

n whoosh then down nobby and over his net and hook

m whoosh Maisie mountain, mountain

h whoosh up then travel down the head, to the hooves and over the horse's back and hook

b whoosh all the way up, down the laces, over the toe and touch the heel-hook

p whoosh then down the pirates plait, up, round and under his chin then hook

k whoosh all the way up, down the kangaroo body, tail, leg and kick

Mainly down and round movements-developed from the basic letter 'i'

i whoosh a little way, down the body and a dot for the head and hook

l whoosh all the way up and down the long leg!

t whoosh up, then down the tower and across the tower

j whoosh a little way, then down his body, curl and dot

Diagonal movements-these are all developed from the basic letter 'v'

v whoosh-straight down a wing and up a wing and hook

w whoosh up, down, up, down, up the worm! Now hook

x whoosh curl-stop, other side curl stop

z whoosh zig, zag, zig down the zip

Key Stage 2 Letter formation and Self-Instruction

Anticlockwise movements-these are all developed from the basic letter 'c'

c whoosh-round

o whoosh-round, round and hook

a whoosh-round, up, down and hook

d whoosh-round, up, up, down, down and hook

g whoosh-round, up, down, down and round

q whoosh-round, up, down, down and tick

s whoosh-round and round the other way, hook

f whoosh up, down and loop,

e whoosh across and round

u whoosh-down, round and up, down and hook

y whoosh, down, round and up, down, down and round

Down, up and over movements-these are developed from the basic letter 'h'

r whoosh-down, up and over a bit
n whoosh-down, up, over, down and hook
m whoosh-down, up, over and down, up, over, down and hook
h whoosh all the way up-down, down, up half way, over, down and hook
b whoosh up-down, down, up half way and over, round and hook
p whoosh-down, down, up, up over and round
k whoosh up, down, down, up, over, round, out and hook

Mainly down and round movements-these are developed from the basic letter i

i whoosh-down and hook-dot
l whoosh-all the way up, down, down and hook
t whoosh up-down and off-pen off and across
j whoosh-down, down and round, curl and hook

Diagonal movements-these are all developed from the basic letter 'v'

v whoosh-down, up and hook
w whoosh, down, up, down, up and hook
x whoosh-curl down stop-other side curl down-stop
z whoosh-across and curl, down, loop and hook

The Joining Style

"Joins between letters are only worthwhile if they increase the speed, rhythm and ease of writing *without* reducing legibility"

All letters should start from the line and should all, except capital letters, should be joined.

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 in Individual Education Plans [I.E.P.'s]. Teachers of children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills should liaise with the SENco to develop a programme designed for the individual child. This may involve extra handwriting sessions and access to extra resources. Other areas that could be considered are posture, lighting, angle of table etc. Outside agencies can be contacted where appropriate.

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

- paper should be positioned to the left for right handed pupils and to the right for left handed pupils and slanted to suit the individual in either case;
- pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision;
- pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side;
- left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space;
- extra practice with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.

Teachers are alert to the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Teachers demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

The learning environment

In all classes, writing boxes with suitable materials are available for pupils to work at their own tables. Writing areas/boxes are equipped with a range of writing implements, line guides, word lists and dictionaries. A model of the agreed handwriting style should be displayed in all classrooms.

Teachers should ensure that all board writing is cursive and neat and all marking is cursive. Displays should include a range of font types but should be mainly cursive.

The role of parents and carers

Parents and carers are introduced to the school's handwriting style through a leaflet. The Early Years Foundation Stage staff play an important role in communicating this at an early stage, to ensure that parents are informed and encouraged to offer good models to their children by using only capital letters for the beginning of their names. They will also offer workshops to introduce cursive writing and the reasons why Hollywood has adopted this approach to writing. They will also provide Write Dance training for parents in the Autumn Term.

All members of staff (including teaching assistants, supply teachers, and students) are provided with appropriate handwriting models [included in staff/student and supply staff handbooks] and are expected to promote the agreed handwriting style by their own example.

The contribution of handwriting to other aspects of the curriculum

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/fonts available. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate a range of fonts and to select whatever is appropriate to suit particular purposes.

Teachers discuss handwriting and presentation in all subjects and aim to 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 in Key Stage One. Teachers give handwriting a high priority in classroom displays. *The use of rubbers is discouraged. Mistakes are indicated by marking through with one neat horizontal line.*

Teachers aim to make handwriting lessons relevant to the curriculum, by providing a purpose to the work where possible, encouraging the children to view handwriting as part of an overall presentation policy.

And for teachers...writing on an interactive whiteboard

Accurate handwriting using this technology takes practice, and yours needs to be as neat and legible as it would be on an old-fashioned whiteboard. Here are some tips:

- Make sure you can calibrate the board and change the thickness of the pen or stylus.
- Be aware of the legibility of different 'ink' colours. Red, for example, can be hard to read from a distance.
- Press firmly and hold the pen or stylus at a 90° angle.
- Stand to one side of the board when writing so all children can see.
- Explore the templates or gallery in your IWB software — they will include lined and squared paper that will help guide your handwriting and offer a better model.

Assessment and recording

Teachers assess handwriting on a regular basis (each term) as part of the APP writing assessment.

Every term all children will complete a piece of handwriting so teachers can assess progress and plan next stages in learning, interventions and focus groups. Handwriting samples will be submitted to the writing manager and each class will have child awarded a handwriting award certificate.

Resources

Write Dance manuals from Early Write Dance to More Write Dance

Pencils triangular and ordinary

Paper

Handwriting books

Letter Join Interactive Whiteboard resources

www.cursivewriting.org font 18

www.kidzone.ws

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually in line with the school's policy review programme. The subject leader is responsible for reporting to the governors' curriculum committee about the quality of its implementation and its impact on standards. In the light of this, policy amendments may be made.

Equal Opportunities

We ensure that each individual child receives an equal learning experience regardless of ability, culture and gender.

Nicola Healy & Kate Pritchard

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Appendix A

Activities and exercises to develop Gross Motor Control:

Gross Motor Control is the term used to describe the development of controlled movements of the whole body, or limbs such as the legs or arms. Of particular importance in relation to handwriting is the development of good posture and balance. Activities such as:

- Dancing and skipping
- Running and jumping to music
- Use of small apparatus e.g. throwing, rolling, catching, kicking and bouncing balls
- Cycling
- Gripping climbing frames
- Building with large-scale construction kits
- Hammering
- Consolidate vocabulary of movement by talking about movements such as, *going round and round, making curves, springing up and sliding down, making long, slow movements or quick, jumpy movements*
- Make large movements in the air with arms, hands and shoulders with dance ribbons, use music

Any activities described in the **Curriculum Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage** under Physical Development

Fine Motor Control is the term used to describe smaller movements, usually of the hand and fingers (or of the feet and toes).

Activities and exercises to develop Fine Motor Control:

- 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 malleable materials like Playdoh, plasticene and clay
- Drawing in sand and sand and water play in general, including sieving, pouring and picking up toys using tools e.g. fishing rods and cranes
- Sewing and weaving
- Chopping and peeling when cooking
- Develop the pincer movement by using tweezers to pick up sequins, beads and feathers, sprinkling glitter, sand and salt
- Scribbling and drawing with chalk, dry wipe pens, felt tip pens and paints on small, large boards and easels 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

Hand gym/miming activities to relax fingers and hands before writing

- Washing
- Wringing, rubbing, shaking and folding clothes
- Brushing hair
- Stroking a cat
- Playing a musical instrument
- Playing with snow, bubbles, feathers, balloons
- Picking up sweets to put in a dish or your mouth

Later on:

- Sit in the writing position but with arms dangling limply. While in this position let the hands flutter loosely
- Let the forearms lay limply on the table in the correct writing position. Raise and lower the elbows several times
- Place elbows on the table with the forearms held upright. Let the hands flap loosely backwards and forwards
- Clench and unclench the fists
- Drum lightly with fingers on the table
- Circle the hands, inwards, then outwards
- Hold the pen in the tripod grip lightly. With the forefinger tap the pencil lightly