



Handwriting Policy

Handwriting needs to be taught daily in Key Stage One for roughly 10-20 minutes depending on need. These handwriting lessons will focus on firstly forming the letters, then sitting the letters on the line, then joining the letters and eventually joining the letters whilst sitting on the line before moving onto words linked to their phonics teaching.

Any teaching of forming letters must be done in small groups with an adult present. Rainbow sheets and the use of a yellow highlighter are recommended to support children who find the forming of letters difficult.

In Key Stage Two, handwriting needs to be taught daily UNTIL the National Curriculum expectations have been mastered for that year group. Once they have been mastered handwriting needs to be taught at least once a week to maintain high standards.

Any SEN identified with poor fine motor skills will have additional handwriting support added to their PLPs.

Handwriting Lesson Structure:

1. Warm up

Brain gym exercises

Finger exercises

Using fingers to write in the air

Using fingers to write on the carpet

Writing letter formation or pattern on their partner's back with fingers

2. Teacher Demonstration

Use appropriate language to explain the moves of the letter as you write.

Talk and demonstrate the position of the letter on the line e.g. tall letter or hanging down letter.

Use technical vocabulary e.g. ascender, descender (with the exception of Early Years)

Model the correct way to hold a pencil

Model the correct way to sit on a chair

Model how to hold the book or paper with your other hand when writing

3. Pupil Activity

Children to practise letters, clusters or words that have been modelled.

Teacher to circulate the room and address any issues regarding letter formation; pencil-grip or posture.

Reinforce finger-spaces between letters or words.

Reinforce position and size of letters using the lines in the handwriting books.

4. Marking

Give children feedback on their handwriting throughout the lesson.

Praise should be given for good formation, consistent letter size, accurate joins and neatness.

Poor letter formation or incorrect joins should be remodelled by the teacher in the child's book.

Teacher comments should be written in a good handwriting style using the lines in books to reinforce letter formation, position and size.

Year R

Stage 1: Year R (gross motor/fine motor skills)

The emphasis at this stage is with movement and close attention is given to pencil grip, correct posture, the positioning of the paper and the organisation of the writing space (i.e. writing moves from left to right and top to bottom)

The children may sometimes ascribe meaning to the marks they make and should be praised when they show an understanding that marks on paper convey meaning. All children in Year R will have opportunities to make marks and form letters, initially, letters in their own name. They will be encouraged to practise the formation of each letter as it is introduced in their phonics work.

Children in Year R will work on developing gross and fine motor skills in various ways:

Play dough (pinching and rolling)

Paper clips (joining and attaching to paper)

Bulldog clips on paper (both hands)

Pegs on to cards (using thumb and index finger)

Threading beads on string

Moving beads along a string

Cutting out objects

Writing patterns

Tracing letters in the air, sand, plastercine and paint

Tracing their own name using cursive script

Copying names within their own family or key words using cursive script

Painting letters or patterns using large brushes, sponges and water

Children in Year R will follow the agreed order for letter formation.

Expectations of children's handwriting in Year R:

- Children will practise with adult supervision to ensure correct formation is established;
- Most letters will be formed correctly (i.e. more than 15);
- Capital letters will be used at the beginning of names, for 'I' and at the beginning of a sentence;
- A correct pencil grip will be established;
- Letters will be formed in once continuous movement using the cursive script.

Stage 2: Mid-Year R and early Year 1

- Letter shapes are best practised in groups which share letter formation;
- Letters should be modelled explicitly by adults as phonemes are introduced in phonics sessions;
- There should be an expectation of correct formation from the beginning;
- Children should be taught to form lower case letters and made aware of matching capital letters.

Handwriting for the rest of the school needs to reflect the expectations in the National Curriculum.

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.

Year 2

Pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

Pupils should be taught to:

- 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 left unjoined;
- write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters;
- use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.
- any children aiming for GD by the end of Year 2 must have fluent, joined up handwriting.

Year 3 /4

Pupils should be using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which pupils are able to write down what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.

Joined handwriting should be the norm. Children should be able to keep up with the pace of what they want to say. Pupils should be taught to:

- 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, 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.

Year 5 and 6

Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task (e.g. quick notes or a final handwritten version). They should also be taught to use an unjoined style (e.g. for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra) and capital letters (e.g. for filling in a form).

Pupils should be taught to:

- write legibly, fluently, with increasing speed and personal style 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 (e.g. quick notes, letters).

Order for letter formation

Phase 1 Curved - c, a, o, d, g, q, s, e

Phase 2 - Curved at bottom - i, u, l, t, y, j, f

Phase 3 - Straight backed (parallel) - h, k, b, m, n, p, r

Phase 4 – Unusual – v, w, z, z

Order for joins – linked to phonics where possible

- diagonal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ai, ar, un
- horizontal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ou, vi, wi
- diagonal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ab, ul, it
- horizontal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ol, wh, ot
- diagonal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ai, ar, un
- horizontal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. ou, vi, wi
- diagonal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ab, ul, it
- horizontal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. ol, wh, ot

Books

Children will be taught the correct letter formation using special handwriting books but once they have mastered the letter formation, children will be taught to apply their handwriting to normal lines in their handwriting books.

Policy agreed: September 2018

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