

Handwriting Policy

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Contents

Handwriting Policy	2
Aims	2
Teaching time	2
EYFS Expectations.....	2
Handwriting Requirements and The National Curriculum	3
Inclusion	5
Consistency and standards.....	5
Appendix 1 - Cursive Script	6

Handwriting Policy

Aims

- To enable children to write clearly and neatly in order to communicate meaning effectively
- To write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed by:
 - Having a correct, tripod, pencil grip
 - Knowing that all printed letters start from the top, except d and e which start in the middle and that when joining (cursive script) all letters start on the line.
 - Forming all letters correctly
 - Knowing the size and orientation of letters

Teaching time

Daily practice is necessary until letter formation is accurate. In the early years and KS1 this will be part of the Read Write Inc daily sessions as well as stand-alone handwriting lessons outside of English lessons.

Specific handwriting books to practice in are used in Y1 and Y2.

Handwriting sessions in KS2 will take place outside English lessons. For those children who need extra practice, interventions will be put in place and parental involvement encouraged.

EYFS Expectations

During the EYFS the children are encouraged to:

- a) Develop gross motor control
- b) Develop fine motor control
- c) Use large equipment to make marks e.g. big chalks, large paint brushes, shaving foam, finger painting
- d) Use a range of mark making tools such as pencils, pens and crayons with confidence and enjoyment
- e) Develop a language to talk about shapes and movements
- f) Practice the three main handwriting movements involved in the three basic letter shapes; c, l and r

As the children progress, they will be encouraged to:

- a) Learn letter formation alongside phonics using Read Write Inc letter speak
- b) Use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters
- c) Receive instant feedback when errors in pencil grip or formation are seen

Formation practice will occur without the restriction of lines, outside of Read Write Inc.

Handwriting Requirements and The National Curriculum

Yr 1 pupils should be taught to:

- sit correctly at a table, feet flat on the floor, 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.

At the beginning of **Yr 2**

- pupils should be able to form individual letters correctly, so establishing good handwriting habits from the beginning.
- Pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined, cursive style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

In **Yr 3 and Yr 4**

- Pupils should be using joined, cursive 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.

In **Yr 5 and Yr 6**

- Pupils should write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed
- Pupils should choose which shape of a letter to use when given choices and decide, as part of their personal style, whether or not to join specific letters
- Pupils should choose the writing implement that is best suited for a task (e.g. a pencil for quick notes, a pen for letters).

Handwriting is a movement skill and one which is best taught directly by demonstration, explanation and practice. Use the "handwriting phrases" from Read Write Inc when teaching individual letter formation.

Teaching the correct formation of the letters must be given highest priority, and this should be achieved by pupils before any attempt is made at joining.

Teaching of letters will be in the order set out in the Read Write Inc scheme:

m a s d t, i n p g o, c k u b, f e l h sh, r j v y w, th z ch qu x ng nk

Capital letters will be taught when lowercase letters have been mastered.
Number formation also needs to be taught.

Joining letters

When letter formation is accurate children will be taught to join. This will usually be during Y2 and Y3 but could be earlier or later. We teach joined writing by demonstrating, explaining and giving children time to practice. All lower case letters start on the line (cursive script). From a printed letter that is formed accurately, children are told to keep their pencil on the page and take it to the starting position of the next letter.

Horizontal joins from letters o v w and joining from letters with a descender f g j q y will need to be explicitly taught. In FS and KS1 individual letters will be displayed in the classroom for children to refer to.

Cursive teaching order (see individual letter styles in appendix 1)

c a d g q s f	(over and back letters)
l h t p b	(up and down letters)
e	
u y i j	(climb and slide letters)
k	(loopy letter)
r o w v	(join to next letter from the top)
m n	(bouncy letters)

x z

We do not join from a capital letter.

Progression of the four basic handwriting joins;

- Practise handwriting patterns from Year 2.
- Begin using and practising the four basic handwriting joins used in the cursive script:
 - 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

When children are joining their writing well, the class teacher will give the children a pen to write with. If handwriting 'slips' the child will revert back to using pencil until returning to the acceptable standard for pen.

Basic structure of a handwriting session

- Warm up, if needed (dough disco FS)
- Posture check; feet flat on the floor, back touching the chair
- Teacher modelling
- Children practising with teacher model, then from memory
- Teacher to walk around class checking on formation

Sessions should be varied and multi-sensory; writing letters in the air, on backs or hands, orally describing letter shapes and joins using RWI letter speak. Children may also use other materials for additional practice e.g. whiteboards, chalk, foam, felt pens, crayons, plasticine, shaving foam.

Inclusion

The vast majority of pupils will be able to write fluently and legibly. However, some pupils may need more support. Teachers of children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills should liaise with the Senco or English subject leader. Support for handwriting may include extra resources as well as posture, lighting, angle of table, etc being considered.

Teachers should be 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.
- Left-handed pupils should be positioned to the left of a right-handed pupil so that they are not competing for space.
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.
- Letters which have a cross-stroke such as t and f, will be formed slightly differently by left-handed children.
- Teachers should be alert to the fact that it is difficult for left-handed children to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Provision may be needed to demonstrate to left-handed pupils on a group or individual basis.

Consistency and standards

Teachers must ensure that high standards are maintained by modelling the correct formation and size of letters when doing any writing on the board, wall or when writing in children's books. The quality of handwriting in all books must be of a high standard and teachers should not accept anything less than the best of each child's ability.

Appendix 1 - Cursive Script

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z