

Date of Policy: February 2016

Date of Review: February 2019

Aims

- To enable pupils to develop a clear, neat and fluent style of handwriting
- To help raise the standard of presentation of work throughout the school
- To ensure a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting

Curriculum Time

In Early Years handwriting is practised as part of learning how to correctly form letters. It is supported through a variety of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic child centred approaches.

In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils will receive one 30 minutes session of direct handwriting teaching per week. In addition, teachers will endeavour to provide a range of other appropriate opportunities for children to develop their handwriting skills across the curriculum.

Progression

In Early Years, teaching and learning will focus on:

- Developing fine motor skills
- Using a range of different materials for writing
- Forming letters correctly

In Key Stage 1, teaching and learning will focus on:

- Forming letters correctly
- Controlling the size, shape and position of letters
- Forming individual letters with the pre-join before looking at joining complete words (this will only occur once the children have completed the Read, Write Inc. scheme of work)

In Key Stage 2, teaching and learning will focus on:

- Joining letters correctly, using the cursive script
- Developing a legible, joined handwriting style
- Increasing fluency and speed

The Benefits of Teaching the Cursive Script

- Letters are produced in a flowing movement, which helps the development of a physical memory of how each letter is written
- Letters all start in the same place and flow from left to right, which reduces the likelihood of reversal mix-ups such as b/d and p/q
- Because of the smooth flow, writing soon becomes quicker and easier.
- A cursive script is recommended by the British Dyslexia Association

Teaching Methods and Organisation

Handwriting will be taught using a range of resources one of which is the 'Penpals for Handwriting' scheme of work, for the majority of children. All class teachers have a copy of their year group's handwriting scheme in their classroom. During weekly timetabled handwriting lessons, teachers will use the following teaching method to ensure that the needs of the individual learner are met.

This will be:

- Warm up: These are used at the start of the lesson to prepare the upper part of the body and the hands for handwriting.
- Focus: Each lesson will have a clear focus. For example: joining eel
- Letter Formation/ Letter Joins: The teacher will demonstrate and talk about correct letter/ join formation and children will be given the opportunity to practise tracing and copying the letters/ joins
- Independent Practise: Using the CD-ROM attached to the scheme of work, differentiated words will be displayed to the children to practise in their handwriting books. In Lower School, these words may be already written in the handwriting books to give children the opportunity to practise tracing over the target letter or joins in words. Alternatively, alternative practise activities will be provided at 'word level' to the children.
- Extension: A longer piece of text will be displayed to the children to enable them to reinforce their letter formation or joins in the context of a longer text.
- Feedback: Throughout the lesson, teachers or teaching assistants will highlight children's learning using the school's green and blue highlighting system to enable children to see straight away the correct joins and ones that may still require more practise.

During the weekly handwriting lesson, it is also important for teachers to reinforce the spelling and phonics work that children are completing in class. This may mean that children are taught to correctly form their spellings as part of their handwriting practise, with teachers adhering to the lesson format model above.

However, it needs to be noted that as soon as children start joining they must include the pre-join, looped g, f, y and j join despite the Penpal scheme not adopting this join.

During handwriting lessons, consideration should be given to the following points:

- Ensuring good seating position and posture
- Seating left handed pupils to the left of right handed pupils
- Ensuring pupils use the correct 'tripod' pencil grip

Pupils will develop their handwriting skills through a range of planned multisensory learning activities that are designed to meet their individual needs. Teachers will use their own professional judgement in order to ensure that learning activities are appropriate for pupils, taking into account their age and ability. Activities may include:

- Sewing, threading, cutting and modelling
- Tracing and copywriting
- Pattern making
- Writing in sand, paint or using different textured surfaces
- Writing using different materials such as chalks, whiteboard pens and crayons
- Finger painting
- Air writing

Pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 will practise letter formation in their handwriting books during weekly handwriting lessons.

Teachers and support staff will give pupils regular verbal and written feedback (as mentioned before this can be done through using the green and blue highlighting system). Verbal feedback should be clear and specific, and should focus on:

- Reinforcing teaching points
- Praising pupils' achievements
- Identifying areas for improvement
- Suggesting methods for improvement
- Encouraging self-evaluation

Teachers and support staff will encourage and assist children in developing their handwriting skills across the curriculum. They will endeavour to use a clear and neat handwriting script at all times in order to provide a high quality model for pupils. Those working with Key Stage 2 pupils will use a joined script.

Equal Opportunities

All pupils will have equal access to handwriting teaching, support, activities and resources. Displays and references to handwriting and presentation in society should show positive role models of different gender, race, religion, ethnicity and disabilities.

Teachers and support staff will demonstrate high expectations of all pupils' presentation of work in order to promote a culture of positivity and pride in achievements.

The school recognises that good handwriting is of particular importance to lower attaining pupils as it can help to raise self-esteem and encourage pupils to take pride in their work. Therefore we aim to identify and provide support for those pupils at as early a stage as possible. Advice will be sought from relevant outside agencies/professionals when teachers raise concerns about pupils' difficulties or lack of progress.

Pupils with identified SEN will be supported through use of specific handwriting targets on Individual Education Plans, which will be focused on and monitored by teachers, support staff and the school's special educational needs coordinator. Teachers may deem it appropriate for some children with special educational needs to be given extra adult support in developing their handwriting skills. This may take place either 1:1 or in a small group, within the lesson or in addition to normal provision.

Resources

The Literacy Coordinator and Headteacher will endeavour to support teachers in providing a range of high quality resources, which will enable high quality teaching and learning to take place.

In Early Years, all pupils should have access to:

- A range of writing materials including pencils, pens, paper, notebooks
- A range of other multisensory resources for teaching and reinforcing fine motor skills

At Key Stage 1 all pupils should have access to:

- Their own handwriting book
- Sharp pencils
- Handwriting Pens, if deemed appropriate by the teacher
- A range of other multisensory resources for reinforcing fine motor skills

At Key Stage 2 all pupils should have access to:

- Their own handwriting book
- Sharp pencils
- Handwriting pens

Some pupils will also have access to pencil grips and thicker pencils as deemed appropriate by the teacher.

School Font

A school pre-join and cursive script font will be purchased and used from April 2016. All letters will be sent out to parents using the cursive script/ pre join script and all WALTs and LOs will be stuck in books using the pre-join or cursive script. All literature that has been typed by the class teacher or teaching assistant will also be produced using the cursive script/ pre join font.

Assessment

Formative assessment of pupils' handwriting will take place informally during the course of lessons. It will enable teachers to identify pupils' understanding, level of skill and progress. It will inform their immediate teaching and their planning for future teaching. Formative assessment may take the form of:

- Observation
- Marking of written work
- Discussion with pupils

Summative Assessment will be carried out informally at the end of each term. Teachers will assess pupils' handwriting as part of an unaided writing task that will be analysed and levelled using the 'Ros Wilson' and 'Pupil Asset' assessment grids. Teachers will comment on pupils' handwriting skills in the annual report to parents.

A 'scrutiny of work' meeting will take place each term to give teachers the opportunity to moderate their assessments of pupils' attainment in writing. This will include handwriting.

Links with Parents

The school recognises the importance of keeping parents informed of our policy and procedures regarding the teaching of handwriting. We value the support of parents in encouraging and assisting their children with handwriting development. Therefore we will endeavour to provide parents with up to date information and advice regarding the handwriting style and teaching methods we use in our school. We will ensure that parents are informed of any change to policy or procedure regarding the teaching of handwriting.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Literacy coordinator and the Headteacher will monitor the quality of teaching and learning of handwriting, with the aim of raising the overall quality of teaching and learning, and levels of pupil attainment. Monitoring may include:

- Scrutiny of planning
- Lesson observation and feedback
- Moderation of pupils' work
- Evaluation of pupils' attainment against targets

Review

This policy was agreed by staff and governors: February 2016.