

Handwriting policy

We believe that handwriting is integral to a child's personal development and know that children's engagement and self-esteem can be improved by their satisfaction and pride in good quality presentation. We share the aspirations that children's handwriting should be 'sufficiently fluent and effortless for them to manage the general demands of the curriculum' and that 'problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say'.

Aims

We aim for our children to leave in Year 6 with the ability to write using their own style of fast, fluent, legible and sustainable handwriting, as well as other styles of writing for specific purposes. We ensure that our children follow the requirements and recommendations of the National Curriculum. Handwriting is a taught skill that develops at different rates for different children. All of the teachers in the school put a priority on teaching handwriting and have high expectations for handwriting across the curriculum. Our school ensures that:

- The importance of handwriting is recognised and given appropriate time.
- Handwriting is acknowledged to be a whole body activity and emphasis is placed on correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting.
- Children learn to assess their own writing and develop understanding for improving it.
- Children practise learning to write in different styles for different purposes such as illustrated capitals letters for creating a poster, swift jottings for writing notes, making a 'best copy' for presentation and fast, fluent and legible writing across the curriculum.
- The progression of handwriting is consistent across the school.
- Expectations of left-handed children are equal to those of right-handed children, and appropriate advice and resources are available to ensure that they learn to write with a comfortable, straight wrist.
- Handwriting is linked into all subjects in order to practise and contextualise all of the transcriptional and stylistic skills for writing.

Progression of skills

In our school we use the following approaches to handwriting:

*Children who are following the Read Write Inc. (RWI) Literacy programme follow the RWI handwriting scheme.

*Children who are following the Fresh Start Scheme (for any children who are in years 5 and 6 who are not yet ready to start Literacy and Language) follow the Fresh Start Handwriting which uses the handwriting narrative from RWI.

*Children who are following the Comprehension programme (which provides a transition between RWI and Literacy and Language) follow the **Penpals for Handwriting Scheme** in conjunction with the spellings from the units and the ¾ lists.

*Children who are following the Literacy and Language programme follow the **Penpals for Handwriting Scheme** in conjunction with the **No Nonsense Spelling Programme**.

The above schemes enable us to teach and secure the development of handwriting throughout the school:

- In EYFS children experience the foundation of handwriting through multi-sensory activities.
- Correct letter formation is taught, practised, applied and consolidated (EYFS /Y1).
- Further consolidation of the RWI strategies are further practised and consolidated in year 2 and ongoing years where children remain on RWI (stages 1 and 2 of the handwriting programme.)
- Children begin to join their letters when they reach stage 3 of the RWI programme (yellow, blue and grey group).
- Those children in writing groups beyond RWI are still reminded of the letter formation with the 'narrative' from RWI.
- Children who follow the Comprehension program and Literacy and Language focus on joins which link to the spelling words of the week.
- As children practise joining, they pay attention to the size, proportion and spacing of their letters and words (Y2–Y6).
- In years 5 and 6 children are introduced to different ways of joining so that they can develop their own preferred personal style.

Handwriting tools

Throughout their time in school, children use a range of tools for different purposes and styles of handwriting including:

- A wide range of tools and media for mark-making in the EYFS.
- Whiteboard pens throughout the school.
- Fingers or a whiteboard pen when writing on the interactive whiteboard.
- Art supplies including coloured pens and pencils for posters, displays and artwork.
- Sharp pencils for most writing.
- From year 1 children write on lines with decreased width. These spaces have lines with dotted lines above to assist them in their letter orientation, for example writing their x height letters, ascenders, descenders and capital letters correctly.
- For children who find writing on smaller lines more challenging they may write on larger lines. As their fine motor skills improve and their letter formation or joining becomes increasingly accurate, the width between the lines they write on will decrease.
- A variety of fine motor skills equipment.

Equality of opportunity

All of our children have equal access to handwriting lessons and to the resources available. We recognise that some children take longer to develop the necessary skills and we cater for those children by providing additional support. Children who need specific fine motor or handwriting interventions are identified early and the impact of interventions is carefully monitored. Children with a physical disability are catered for, and progress is monitored, according to their individual action plans.