

Calow Church of England (V.C.) Primary School

Handwriting Policy

Introduction

The importance of handwriting to the curriculum. Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Handwriting is concerned with individual expression and the conveying of meaning through fluent composition. The principal aim is that handwriting becomes an automatic process which frees pupils to focus on the content of the writing. In order for this to occur, handwriting is taught in ways that enhance fluency, legibility, purposefulness and the opportunity for creative expression.

Aim

To produce clear, well formed, legible writing that is consistent and neat in appearance.

Objectives:

- Teach children to write in a neat joined style.
- Encourage children to understand the importance and pride in good presentation.
- Enable children to write fluently at an appropriate speed.

Key Skills

- Capital and lower case letters and numerals are clearly shaped, correctly formed and orientated, and need to start in the correct place.
- Upper and lower case letters are accurately produced in one style and used consistently. They are not mixed randomly within words.
- Children should grip the pencil about 3cms from the point so that they can see what they are writing. Their grip should not be too tight as this will prevent fluent handwriting. The pencil should be held in a relaxed grip between the thumb and forefinger. Pencil grips should be used if necessary.
- Children should be encouraged to sit with straight backs, legs under the table and both feet on the floor.
- Paper should be positioned at the correct angle.
- Consideration should be given to a left-handed child. They may need to sit at the left-hand side of the desk. They should be encouraged to keep their elbow into their side.

Strategy for implementation

Entitlement and curriculum provision

Timetabled teaching occurs outside the Literacy lesson daily in KS1 through the use of the Nelson scheme. In KS2 classes, timetabled handwriting occurs outside the English lesson once a week. Skills are assessed and applied throughout all aspects of the curriculum where writing occurs. Children practice their handwriting in a specific handwriting book. Shared and guided writing provides many opportunities for the modelling and monitoring of handwriting. There are times at both key stages when this aspect of writing is a focus for attention and more time is devoted to the objectives relating to handwriting and presentation.

Teaching and Learning

Handwriting is a skill which needs to be taught explicitly. Since handwriting is essentially a movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed style by the teacher is very important. The Nelson Handwriting Scheme supports the teaching of handwriting. Consistency in the attitudes displayed, the methods employed and the models provided is the key to effective learning. A mixture of whole class, small group and individual teaching is planned. Teaching points are outlined in Appendix A.

The role of the teacher:

- to follow the School policy to help each child develop legible and fluent handwriting;
- to provide direct teaching and accurate modelling at all times (modelled shared writing, marking and feedback and in all handwriting lessons);

- to provide resources and an environment which promotes good handwriting;
- to observe pupils, monitor progress and determine targets for development;
- to promote knowledge, skills and understanding as outlined in Appendix B.

Continuity and Progression

Foundation Stage

Letter formation and orientation are taught first through play based activities to develop hand-eye co-ordination and fine motor skills. This will ensure the foundations necessary to ensure developed pencil control and accurate letter formation and spacing.

In Nursery the children are encouraged to:

- Develop motor control
- Develop fine motor control
- Use a range of mark making tools such as pencils, pens and crayons, with confidence and enjoyment
- Develop a recognition of pattern
- Develop a language to talk about shapes and movements
- Make marks
- Develop letter like shapes
- Write their first name, using a capital letter for the beginning and correct letter formation.

In **Reception** the children further develop large and fine motor skills learned through play based learning in Nursery and in addition:

- Develop letter formation within letters and sounds sessions. (Where there will be an emphasis on an expectation of presentation).
- Learn letter formation using 'shape families':
 - Long ladder letters l l j t u y
 - One armed robot letters r b h k m n p
 - Curly caterpillar letters c a d e g o q f s
 - Zigzag letters z v w x
- Children should write on lined paper

Key Stage One

Year One

Teachers explicitly teach handwriting daily for 10 minute sessions per week. The handwriting skills taught in this session are reinforced during letter and sounds lessons where presentation is valued but does not detract from the phonic content of the session. Children should write on lined paper.

Year Two

Teachers explicitly teach handwriting daily for 20 minute sessions per week. The handwriting skills taught in this session are reinforced during letter and sounds lessons where presentation is valued but does not detract from the phonic content of the session. By Year 2 children should be moving towards a joined handwriting style and write on lined paper with a reasonable degree of accuracy. Children should write on lined paper.

Years Three and Four

In Year Three the pupils consolidate their use of the four basic handwriting joins, ensuring consistency in size proportion and spacing of letters. Handwriting speed, fluency and legibility are built up through practice. By Year Four joined handwriting is used at all times unless other specific forms are required, e.g. printing on a map, a fast script for notes.

Years Five and Six

Years Five and Six are used to consolidate learning for those pupils who have not yet achieved a fluent and legible joined script. Those who have will develop an individual style based on the principles of good handwriting taught in

previous years. Experimentation with different styles and writing implements is encouraged with the aim of increasing speed whilst maintaining legibility.

The contribution of handwriting to other aspects of the curriculum

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. Teachers give handwriting a high priority in classroom displays. The use of rubbers is allowed. However, longer errors are indicated by marking through with one neat horizontal line. Teachers in Key Stage Two aim to make handwriting lessons relevant to the curriculum, by providing a purpose to the work where possible, encouraging children to view handwriting as part of an overall presentation policy.

Inclusion

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and a specific individual group programme is drawn up in consultation with the S.E.N.C.O.

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 is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when they are modelled by a right-handed teacher. Teachers demonstrate to lefthanders on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

The role of parents / guardians

Parents/Guardians are introduced to the School's handwriting style through written information. The Nursery/Reception teacher plays an important role in communicating this at an early stage to ensure that parents are informed and encouraged to help their child by using capital letters for the beginning of names, practising drawing patterns together, playing 'joining up' games which encourage left to right directionality.

Assessment and recording

Children will be assessed on a regular basis including at the end of handwriting lessons, through teacher's marking. Assessments will be made relating to children's abilities to write legibly and neatly using correct letter formation. During upper Key Stage Two years, assessment will also be made on pupils' ability to write at speed using a fluent consistent joined style. Children will also self- assess their work and have a clear knowledge of the steps they need to complete to further their handwriting.

Teachers pay particular attention to pupils with Individual Educational Plans which have objectives that relate to handwriting.

This Policy was devised in March 2015 and is reviewed on an annual basis.

Policy revised: February 2017

Appendix A

Key Skills:

- Letters are usually clearly shaped, correctly formed and orientated
- Capital letters are recognised, correctly formed and orientated
- Numerals are correctly formed and orientated
- Upper and lower case letters are accurately produced in one style and used consistently
- Handwriting is joined, fluent, legible and evident in independent writing
 - Children start to use a pen
- Hand writing is adapted to a range of tasks

Teaching Points:

- Teach the correct grip
- Ensure correct formation at all times, close monitoring of individuals is important while engaged in this formal writing process
- Ensure correct posture with children sitting comfortable and upright, with feet flat on the floor
- Ensure there is good lighting
- Ensure each child has a suitable implement before they begin, pencils are adequately sharpened and pens are ball point and suitable for fluent writing
- Capital letters do not join to lower case letters
- Link handwriting practice to spelling patterns
- The teacher will act as a model

Suggestions for teaching left-handed children:

Seating – Consideration should always be given to the amount of space a left handed child needs to write, without interfering with others. This may mean sitting the child on the left side of a table.

Grip – The children should grip the pencil at least an inch from the point so that he/she is able to see what they are writing. The grip should not be too tight. A 'pencil grip aid' may be used to help position the fingers correctly. The pencil should be held with the handle pointing back up the arm towards the shoulder.

Position the paper – Position the paper to the left of the body, at an angle, with the right hand top corner of the paper nearer the body than the left. This develops a freer movement and makes possible the development of vertical writing or even a forward slant.

Writing implements – It is easiest to use a pencil at first as the push and pull movements are equal. Children should be encouraged to use a ball point pen later on.

Appendix B

Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

In Foundation Stage 1 the children are encouraged to:

- Develop gross motor control;
- Develop fine motor control;
- Use large equipment to make marks e.g. chalks, large paint brushes, shaving foam, finger painting etc.;
- Use a range of mark making tools such as pencils, pens and crayons, etc. with confidence and enjoyment;
- Develop a recognition of pattern;
- Develop a language to talk about shapes and movements;
- The main handwriting movements involved in the three basic letter shapes; c, l and r; When the children have developed appropriate gross and fine motor control, they be gradually introduced to letter formation and encouraged to learn how to write their first name, using a capital letter for the beginning and correct letter formation.

During Foundation Stage 2 the majority of children will:

- Learn letter formation alongside phonics using 'letter speak';

Learn letter formation using 'shape families':

- Long ladder letters l | j t u y
- One armed robot letters r b h k m n p
- Curly caterpillar letters c a d e g o q f s
- Zigzag letters z v w x

- Use a pencil, and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters (with 'kicks'/'flicks'), most of which are correctly formed;
- Receive instant feedback when errors in pencil grip or formation are seen. When digraphs are introduced during phonics sessions, children will be introduced to the joins. Formation practice will also occur without the restriction of lines, including the use of whiteboards, sand trays etc.

At Year One the majority of children will:

- Be taught letter formation in the following order:
- c, o, a, d, g, q (anti-clockwise round);

- r, n, m, h, b, p (down and retrace upwards);
- i, l, u, t, y, j (down and off in another direction);
- v, w, x, z (zig zag letters);
- e, f, s, k, (odd letters);
- Write most letters, correctly formed and orientated, using a comfortable and efficient pencil grip; • Write with spaces between words accurately;
- Develop speed.

At Year Two the majority of children will:

- Write legibly, using upper and lower-case letters appropriately and correct spacing within and between words;
- Form ascenders and descenders consistently and correctly;
- Practice writing at speed;
- Form and use the four basic handwriting joins (see below).

At Year Three the majority of children will:

- Develop joined handwriting;
- Further develop writing speed and stamina;
- Produce writing which sits on the line most of the time;

At Year Four the majority of children will write with:

- Joined handwriting the majority of the time;
- Ascenders and descenders in the correct place and on the lines;
- Automaticity (i.e. not having to think about formation).

At Year Five and Six the majority of children will write with:

- Consistent size and letter spacing;
- A cursive, legible, accurate style;
- Competency at a steady dictation speed.

Early assessment of writing in Nursery and the Early Years: Pencil grip

Where are the children writing from?

Technique	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Balance: Being able to sit independently with arms free to use pencils, crayons etc.						
Shoulder stability: The ability to control the movement of the shoulder is important for reaching, as well as supporting the forearms, wrist and finger actions.						
Forearm control: The ability to move the forearm through a range of movements.						
Wrist stability: The ability to hold wrists in a stable and controlled position.						
Grasp: The ability to grasp and release a writing tool.						

Handwriting grip assessment:

Pencil grasp development



Technique	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
1						
2						
3						
4						

Letter Formation

c a d g q e s f o

l i t j y u

r b n h m k p

v w x z



Letter Formation

C D G Q S O

E F L I T J Y U

A R B N H M K P

v w x z



