



Handwriting Policy

Rationale

“Handwriting serves writing. The prime, functional importance of handwriting is to convey legibly, the writer’s message to the reader.” (Cripps and Fox, 1989)

Cursive handwriting teaches children to join letters and words as a series of flowing movements and patterns.

Cursive handwriting helps:

- To minimise confusion for the child as every letter starts on the line with an entry stroke and leads out with an exit stroke
- Form spacing between words as the child develops whole word awareness
- Develop a child's visual memory.
- Develop a child’s physical hand-eye co-ordination.

Aims

- To develop clear, concise and legible handwriting.
- To ensure that the physical skills of handwriting are taught correctly from the outset.
- To help children recognise that handwriting is a life-long skill.
- To help children recognise that handwriting is a form of communication and, as such, should be considered important in order for it to be effective.
- To give the child the opportunity to master the skills of a joined hand, before the desire to communicate in writing reaches its full momentum.
- To assist the child in the acquisition of differing spelling strategies.

Guidelines

- Children will be taught joined up handwriting from the outset following the Nelson Thorne’s handwriting scheme from Reception to Year 6.

This uses the following stages:

1. Pre-writing patterns and activities, which build on the child’s natural free-flowing scribble in order to develop pencil control.
2. The development of individual letter formation with correct orientation and using exit ligatures to aid future joining of letter strings.
3. The use of letter patterns that are linked to word families appropriate to the age/stage of development of the child.
4. The development of a flowing joined handwriting style.

- Children will participate in weekly whole class practise sessions led by the teacher and modelled on the board.
- Sessions will last between 20-30 minutes.
- Children will record their handwriting practise in their handwriting books. Each piece of work will be dated.
- Children will apply their handwriting skills across the whole curriculum.
- The Interactive whiteboard will be used in direct teaching and Nelson CD ROMS where appropriate.

At all times and at all stages the children will be encouraged to:-

- A correct pencil grip which is firm but relaxed.
- A correct writing posture.
- Position their paper to suit either right or left handed children in order, to find a comfortable writing position.
- Ensure left handed children are able to write as freely and legibly as right handed children.
- Explore a range of writing tools in order to choose the correct tools for the correct form of writing.

Conclusion

A legible hand leads to effective communication. We will strive to achieve high standards of presentation and provide positive rewards for effort and improvement. Parents will be encouraged to play an active role in the practice and acquisition of this skill.



Appendix

Development of learning and teaching handwriting through our school

Reception

- On entry, Reception children will be involved in a variety of activities to develop essential pre-writing skills in line with the Early Learning Goals of the Foundation Stage.
- Throughout the reception year, opportunities to practise fine and gross motor skills will be provided for all children:
- Children will be introduced to actual letter formation in conjunction with the introduction of phonic skills. Sounds are closely linked with handwriting patterns.
- Practise of particular high frequency words helps to develop good visual and writing habits: e.g. 'the', 'and'.
- By the end of the Reception Year, all children will have been introduced to all letters of the alphabet through patterns as shown in Nelson and will have been introduced to more independent writing.
- Children practise their names in joined script by tracing over in the first instance and then underneath and ultimately, using motor memory.

Year 1

- In Year 1 the skills acquired in the Foundation Stage will be continued, consolidating correct formation, concentration and accurate precision work.
- All children write in pencil.
- Spellings are closely linked with handwriting activities which assist the children with phonic skills required for successful reading and writing.
- Pupils will learn to form individual letters appropriately and accurately first.
- Pupils will learn to join letters and practice letter strings
- By the final term of Year 1 pupils will begin to join their handwriting.

Year 2

- Children will consolidate the letter joins learnt in Year 1.
- Children learn the horizontal joins and will practice letter strings, words and short sentences.

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Years 3-6

- The Cursive style continues to develop through close links with the Primary Framework for literacy and in conjunction with the Nelson Handwriting Programme.
- Phonic, spelling and awareness of grammar are all taught through handwriting practice and, as fluency and accuracy develop, pupils are encouraged to write with an ink pen (from Year 4 onwards).
- Older children will be encouraged to develop their own writing style which maintains fluency and correct letter formation.
- Older children will practice speed writing that will help them to think quickly and remember spellings.