

Duddon Saint Peter's CE School



Handwriting

This policy follows the statutory requirements for Handwriting across Key Stages 1 and 2 (*NC for English September 2014*). The policy states the requirements for each year group, so that it is clear what needs to be taught in each class through the school. In Early Years and Key Stage One, this policy also links with our phonics scheme, Ready, Steady Phonics which was implemented in September 2022. Recent guidance states that cursive handwriting should only be introduced once children have completed Phase 5 phonics or by the end of Key Stage.

Handwriting can take a variety of forms throughout the school, as part of the daily phonics input, as a teacher led activity involving modelling of writing and within other areas of the curriculum. Staff are expected to use clear cursive handwriting during lessons and when marking books. This consistent and whole school approach from staff helps to develop children's handwriting and encourages high standards.

Aims

- To have a consistent cursive approach across the whole school to ensure high levels of presentation.
- To adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays / resources.
- Children to achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting.
- Children to develop fluency and speed whilst writing, so that eventually children are able to write the letters with confidence and correct orientation.

It is important to maintain consistency between key stages and a continuity of approach to letter formation, therefore handwriting skills are taught regularly and systematically from Reception to Year 6, using the age appropriate handwriting style.

Organisation

In Early Years and Key Stage One, handwriting is taught daily as part of the Ready, Steady Phonics input. Handwriting is also timetabled in short, regular sessions and where possible is integrated across the curriculum. In all classes, handwriting is taught, at least, on a weekly basis and is practiced by pupils at appropriate times of the day. The length of sessions varies across the year groups. Handwriting activities are

undertaken as a whole class activity to enable the teacher to model writing patterns or phonemes and to instruct pupils on how to develop effective and efficient pen control. In addition to discrete handwriting lessons, children are expected to apply their learning in all their books and to show care for the presentation of their work.

Teaching and Learning

As recommended by the British Dyslexia Association, the school has adopted a continuous cursive style of writing. Teachers and Teaching assistants model the agreed cursive style when modelling writing in class, on displays and in feedback in books.

From the end of Key Stage One or from the completion of Phase 5, the agreed cursive style is as below:

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

Development and progression

i) Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS):

During Nursery and Reception, pupils are involved in a variety of activities to develop essential pre-writing skills in line with the Early Learning Goals of the Foundation Stage, e.g. letter and number formation in sand trays, through tracing, use of ribbons, mark-making with chalk, felt tips, pencils, crayons, writing over and under teacher models in various forms, word building with magnetic letters and pattern making in various media.

In Reception, individual letter formation is taught, modelled and practiced according to guidance from Ready, Steady Phonics. Children are introduced to pre-cursive, cursive and a variety of fonts script at the earliest stages of writing.

By the end of Reception children will have been taught to:

- Have the correct pen/pencil grip.
- Form all letters correctly according to Ready Steady Phonics Scheme.
- Awareness of capital and lower case letters.
- Use pattern-making and letter/number formation in various media.
- Write from left to right.
- Be consistent with the size and shape of letters and the spacing of letters and words.
- Have the correct posture and position

ii) Key Stage 1

During Key Stage One, children are encouraged to form all letters from the correct starting point and begin to exhibit greater control over size and orientation, according to the Ready, Steady Phonics Scheme. Consolidation of both lower case and capital letter formation is a primary focus, as is awareness of ascender and descender letters. Children are also reminded to space their handwriting accurately in order that it can be easily read.

During Year Two, children are introduced to joined writing techniques. This is started according to guidance and ensures that children seem secure in the coordinated movements associated with each letter and have a good control over letter orientation, formation and proportion. Handwriting may be linked to the daily phonics session, or used in conjunction with spelling and independent writing.

Year One (statutory requirements)

Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. Whatever writing implement is being used should allow the pupil to hold it easily and correctly, so that

bad habits are avoided. Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs.

Pupils should be taught to:

- Sit correctly at a table, 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.

Year Two (statutory requirements)

Pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

Pupils should be taught to:

- Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another.
- Start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined.
- Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters.
- Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

Children at the end of Year Two, working at expected standards should be writing in cursive joined up handwriting. Without this, children are not be able to achieve the expected standard.

iii) Key Stage Two

Pupils continue to have direct teaching and regular practice of handwriting. They should aim to develop a clear and fluent style and by the end of Key Stage Two, be able to adapt their handwriting for different purposes.

Years Three - Four (statutory requirements)

Pupils should be using joined 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.

Pupils should be taught to:

- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined.
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, e.g. by ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel and lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.

Years Five - Six (statutory requirements)

Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say.

They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task (e.g. quick notes or a final handwritten version). They should also be taught to use an unjoined style (e.g. for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra) and capital letters (e.g. for filling in a form).

Pupils should be taught to:

- Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding (as part of their personal style) whether or not to join specific letters.
- Choose the writing implement that is best suited for a task (e.g. quick notes, letters).

Posture

- Chairs and desks within classrooms are matched to children's age and height.
- Children's backs should be straight and feet resting on the floor. A right-handed child should have their book slanted to the left. For a left-handed child, the book should be slanted to the right.
- The hand which is not holding the pencil or pen should be holding the paper.

Provision for left handed children

Left-handed children should sit on the left side of right-handed children, so their elbows do not bump. They should be encouraged to find a comfortable orientation for their paper, usually slightly to the left of centre of their body, and to have their fingers about 1.5 cm from the point of their pencil.

Pencil Grip

If children are to develop a fluid and rapid writing style then they must learn how to hold a pencil with a grip which is relaxed but allows for efficient pencil control.

Right-hander – a tripod grip is generally accepted as the most efficient way of holding a pencil. It should be lightly held between the thumb and forefinger about 3cm from the point. The middle finger provides additional support.

Left-hander - The tripod grip should be the most favoured method of pencil holding but children should be aware that when making joining strokes the letters are pushed, not pulled. Encourage left handed children to hold their pencil far enough away from the point to allow them to read what they are writing.

Equal opportunities and differentiation

Some children, for a variety of reasons, may have problems with legible, correctly formed and orientated handwriting. Children needing additional support should be given short bursts of handwriting practice, one-to-one with a Teaching assistant, or Class teacher, as often as possible. They should also receive catch up phonics interventions and have access to activities which promote fine motor control such as Fiddly Fingers. Sometimes, handwriting may form part of an IEP. Children with Special Educational needs, where necessary, will be provided with specialist equipment such as pencil grips or wider ruled lined paper.

Exceptionally able pupils may progress at different rates at the discretion of the class teacher. For those children who have mastered a fluent, neat cursive style continual practice may not be necessary.

Assessment, Monitoring and Moderation

Children in the EYFS are assessed on an ongoing basis through observation; handwriting informs part of this. Within Key Stage One and Key Stage Two, handwriting is assessed as part of children's writing assessments using the assessment criteria for given year groups. Samples of children's independent writing across a range of subjects will be assessed and moderated by the subject team.

Expectations for Standards of Presentation

Pupils are taught to respect their own and other children's work and they are encouraged to take pride in their presentation of work across all areas of the curriculum.

Teachers are expected to:

Set a positive example to children by modelling good handwriting when writing on the board, IWB or when marking children's books. Teachers strive to model the

age and stage appropriate formation demonstrating the fluency and legibility of the style.

Date: January 2023

Date of review: Spring 2024

