



Spennithorne CE Primary School

Handwriting Policy

Aims

As a school, our aim in teaching handwriting is that the children will:

- Experience coherence and continuity in learning and teaching across the school
- Develop a recognition and appreciation of pattern and line
- Understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly
- Take pride in the presentation of their work and therefore study handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement.
- Be supported in developing correct spelling quickly through a multi-sensory approach to handwriting
- Be able to write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.
- Use their skills with confidence in real life situations.
- Develop a fluent, joined handwriting style by the start of Year 2.

Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

During and at the end of the Foundation Stage, children should be able to:

- Use a pencil, and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters [with 'kicks'/'flicks'], *most* of which are correctly formed

At Year One, children should be able to:

- Write most letters, correctly formed and orientated, using a comfortable and efficient pencil grip
- Write with spaces between words accurately
- Use the spacebar and keyboard to type their name and simple texts

By the end of KS1, children should be able to:

- Write legibly, using upper and lower-case letters appropriately and correct spacing within and between words
- Form and use the four basic handwriting joins
- Word process short narrative and non-narrative texts
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Teaching and Learning

Handwriting is one of the 12 strands of learning in the Primary Framework for Literacy. Learning objectives for handwriting appear in strand 12, Presentation. Teaching handwriting in the Foundation Stage will follow guidance laid down within Letters and Sounds (DFES 2007). In Key Stage 1 and 2, handwriting tuition will follow guidance set out in the Primary Framework for Literacy (DFES 2007)

We teach handwriting as both a specific skill as well as independent task. Little and often is the most successful way with additional, independent practise within Reading Workshop sessions.

The basic structure of a handwriting session should include:

- Relaxation and posture check (feet on floor, back on chair), teacher modelling, children practising
- Handwriting books should be used, though whiteboards and pens are ideal for practise as mistakes can be wiped away leaving no record of poor performance which could discourage children.

In the autumn term in FS2, the children are encouraged to:

- Develop gross and 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 and produce letter-like shapes
- Start to write their first name, using a capital letter for the beginning and correct letter formation

In the spring and summer terms, the children continue to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding by:

- Learning letter formation alongside phonics using Letters and Sounds
- Learn letter formation using 'shape families':

long ladder letters l i 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,

Once basic letter formation is mastered, children are provided with handwriting books

At the end of FS2 or the beginning of Year One, the majority of the children should be introduced to joins. Handwriting books will be provided. It may help children to leave a blank line between each line of writing initially to avoid ascenders and descenders overlapping.

The Joining Style

Joins are made **both to and from** the following letters: a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w y

Joins are made **to but not from** the following 8 letters: x

Joins are *never* made **to or from the letter z**

The 4 basic joins are:

1. Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. in, on, at
2. Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. at
3. Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. on
4. Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. the 'eb' in z-eb-ra

Inclusion

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and provision will be made for this in IEPs. Teachers of children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills should liaise with the SENCO to develop a programme designed for the individual child. This may involve extra handwriting sessions and access to extra resources. Other areas that could be considered are posture, lighting, angle of table etc. Outside agencies can be contacted where appropriate. 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. (*Developing Early Writing* (page 161) has further guidance on this)

Teachers are alert to the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Teachers demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

The learning environment

In all classes, writing boxes with suitable materials are available for pupils to work at their own tables. Writing areas/boxes are equipped with a range of writing implements, line guides, word lists and dictionaries. *A model of the agreed handwriting style should be displayed in all classrooms.*

The role of teachers, parents and carers

Parents and carers are introduced to the school's handwriting style through information evenings or through the parent handbook. Teaching staff play an important role in communicating expectations to ensure that parents are informed and encouraged to offer good models to their children by using only capital letters for the beginning of their names.

All members of staff (including teaching assistants, supply teachers, and students) are provided with appropriate handwriting models and are expected to promote the agreed handwriting style by their own example.

Teachers give handwriting a high priority in classroom displays. *The use of rubbers is discouraged. Mistakes are indicated by marking through with one neat horizontal line.*

Accurate handwriting using an IWB takes practice, but it is important that teacher handwriting is neat and legible. Before using the IWB, calibrate the board and change the thickness of the pen or stylus. Be aware of the legibility of different 'ink' colours. Red, for example, can be hard to read from a distance. Remember to stand to one side of the board when writing so all children can see. Explore the templates or gallery in your IWB software — they will include lined and squared paper that will help guide your handwriting and offer a

better model.

Examples of the handwriting style to be adopted across the school are available from the Headteacher on request.

This policy is updated in line with the school's policy review schedule

Appendix A: Activities and exercises to develop Gross Motor Control

Gross Motor Control is the term used to describe the development of controlled movements of the whole body, or limbs such as the legs or arms. Of particular importance in relation to handwriting is the development of good posture and balance. Activities to support this include:

Dancing and skipping

Running and jumping to music

Use of small apparatus e.g. throwing, rolling, catching, kicking and bouncing balls

Cycling

Gripping climbing frames

Building with large-scale construction kits

Hammering

Consolidating vocabulary of movement by talking about movements such as, *going round and round, making curves, springing up and sliding down, making long, slow movements or quick, jumpy movements*

Making large movements in the air with arms, hands and shoulders with dance ribbons, use music

Any activities described in the **Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage** under Physical Development

Fine Motor Control is the term used to describe smaller movements, usually of the hand and fingers (or of the feet and toes). Activities and exercises to develop Fine Motor Control include:

Folding paper

Cutting out shapes from paper and card

Fitting things into frames like geometric shapes

Model making

Building and stacking bricks

Screw toys and wood working tools

Pegboards

Modelling with malleable materials like Playdoh, plasticene and clay

Drawing in sand and sand and water play in general, including sieving, pouring and picking up toys using tools e.g. fishing rods and cranes

Sewing and weaving

Chopping and peeling when cooking

Develop the pincer movement by using tweezers to pick up sequins, beads and feathers, sprinkling glitter, sand and salt

Scribbling and drawing with chalk, dry wipe pens, felt tip pens and paints on small, large boards and easels and on small and large paper

Playing with tactile and magnetic letters

Puzzles

Games and miming involving finger and wrist movement e.g. finger puppets

Use increasingly finer tools to make patterns of lines