

Bushfield Road Infant School



Handwriting Policy

Updated: Autumn 2021 Review Date: Autumn 2022

School Handwriting Policy

Effective teaching of handwriting can only be achieved through modelling. Teachers must demonstrate letter formation and joins daily and children must practise by carefully copying and repeating. It is important to observe children writing to ensure they are forming letters correctly and confidently.

Handwriting Objectives

- To establish good handwriting habits
- To develop a fluent and legible handwriting style
- To develop pride and satisfaction in producing neat handwriting

Handwriting Principles

Handwriting should be taught discretely, in short, frequent sessions. It should be modelled by the teacher and then supervised. Children should be self/peer assessing, looking for consistency.

Where possible, it should be linked to phonic and spelling patterns. This will help with handwriting and with the 'muscle memory' of spellings.

It is important to use appropriate writing materials at each stage of writing development.

A sharp pencil is essential for handwriting practice.

Pupils will practise on the same lines as they are going to use in their writing books.

High expectations of writing are needed. Children will be given the opportunity to 'fix' mistakes.

Teachers need to model good handwriting at all times, e.g. when writing on the whiteboard and when marking books.

Children need to see good examples of handwriting on classroom displays.

Handwriting in the Foundation Stage

Good handwriting relies on secure motor control and hand-eye coordination. Children in the Foundation Stage should learn handwriting through movement with the actual writing of letters as the ultimate aim. Children will:

- Engage in activities requiring hand-eye coordination
- Use one handed tools and equipment
- Draw lines and circles using gross motor movement
- Manipulate objects with increasing control
- Begin to use anticlockwise movement and retrace vertical lines
- Begin to form recognisable letters
- Use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.

Throughout the Foundation Stage, children need lots of opportunities to develop:

- Physical control through large scale movement such as outdoor play, balancing, climbing, marching and moving to music
- Manipulative skills such as using tools, cooking utensils and scissors.
- Fine motor control and hand-eye coordination, through activities such as jigsaws, threading, cutting and manipulating 'small world' equipment.
- The key movements underpinning letter formation should be introduced through large scale movements from the shoulder.

In the earliest stages, children should make the movements symmetrically using both arms. Once the movement is firmly established in kinaesthetic memory, it can be reduced in scale using activities such as writing in the air, in sand etc. and then reduced further in activities using felt tip pens, crayons and chubby pencils.

In FS2, children will continue to practise individual letter formation and we will introduce a 'tail' so that children will become accustomed to a style which will be easy to join in the future. Children will be given opportunities to use pencils, crayons and other writing implements to encourage children to gain confidence in drawing and producing controlled lines. As appropriate, children will be introduced to joining the letters for the phonemes linked to Phonics Phase 2 and Phase 3.

Handwriting in Year 1

In Year 1 we will further encourage the good handwriting habits developed in the Foundation Stage. We will practise handwriting with the children discretely in the appropriate handwriting book and we will encourage the use of tidy writing in all independent work. Children will:

- Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
- Form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the correct place
- Form capital letters
- Form digits 0-9
- Leave spaces between words
- Understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these
- Begin to use some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined (b, g, j, p, q, s, x, y, z)
- Begin to form lower case letters of the correct size relative to one another.

Handwriting in Year 2

In Year 2 we will continue to develop the handwriting patterns developed in Year 1. We will continue to practise handwriting with the children discretely in the appropriate handwriting book and encourage the use of tidy writing in all independent work. Children will:

- Form lower case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- Continue 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 (b, g, j, p, q, s, x, y, z)
- Write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation using the correct diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters
- 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 reflect size of the letters.

Supporting Left-Handed Pupils

Left handed children can experience greater difficulties with writing and teachers will take into account the needs of left handed writers.

Left handed pupils will:

- Sit on the left of right handed pupils to avoid their writing arms from bumping each other
- Take care not to press too hard when writing
- Sit with their body and paper at a slant to the right so that they can see what they have written and allow the pencil to move more freely.

Some left handed children may benefit from holding the pencil higher up and from using a left handed pencil.

Supporting children with SEND

Some children with specific difficulties may benefit from the use of specific equipment, such as a writing slope, triangular pencil grip and through the use of a 'Rainbow book' to promote overlearning of letter formation.

Progression

Teachers are advised to refer to the resource book 'Best Handwriting for ages 4-5, 5-6 and 6-7' (Andrew Brodie Publications) to support the teaching of handwriting progressively and at the appropriate stage for the pupils in their class. A prompt sheet has been created for all members of staff to refer to. Workbooks are also available to teachers as resources and good models but it must be emphasised that teachers modelling handwriting and observing as pupils form letters and joins is crucial to successful learning and ensuring pupils acquire the appropriate skills.

MODERATION OF POLICY

The Head teacher is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy. The SLT and Governors use discussions with staff, progress meetings, lesson observations and work scrutiny to monitor the implementation of this policy.

- ***Reviewed: Autumn 2021***