



Handwriting policy

Introduction

We aim for our children to leave in Year 6 with the ability to write using fast, fluent, legible and sustainable handwriting. In addition to teaching handwriting during our regular handwriting lessons, we have high expectations that what is taught and practiced in handwriting lessons will be used in all writing activities. We believe that handwriting is integral to a child's personal development and know that children's engagement and self-esteem can be improved by their satisfaction and pride in good quality presentation.

Aims

All of the teachers in the school put a priority on teaching handwriting and have high expectations for handwriting across the curriculum. Our school uses *Penpals for Handwriting* to ensure that:

- The importance of handwriting is recognised and given appropriate time.
- The progression of handwriting is consistent across the school.
- Handwriting is acknowledged to be a whole body activity and emphasis is placed on correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting.
- Expectations of left-handed children are equal to those of right-handed children, and appropriate advice and resources are available to ensure that they learn to write with a comfortable, straight wrist.
- Handwriting is linked into grammar, punctuation and spelling in order to practice and contextualise all of the transcriptional and stylistic skills for writing.
- Children learn to self-assess their own writing and develop understanding and responsibility for improving it.
- Children learn to write in different styles for different purposes such as print for labelling a diagram, illustrated capitals letters for creating a poster, swift jottings for writing notes
- Publishing books are used for making a 'best copy' for presentation.

Progression of skills

Penpals enables us to teach and secure the development of handwriting throughout the school:

- First, children experience the foundation of handwriting through multi-sensory activities (EYFS).
- Correct letter formation is taught, practised, applied and consolidated (EYFS/Y1).
- Joining is introduced only after correct letter formation is used automatically (Y1/Y2/Y3).
- Joins are introduced systematically and cumulatively (Y2–Y6).
- As children practice joining, they pay attention to the size, proportion and spacing of their letters and words (Y3–Y6).



Sassoon Font

The Sassoon font (Penpals) is used across school. Posters are displayed in each classroom to encourage consistency. Handwriting is practised on lined paper so children can learn letter sizing and orientation, including ascenders and descenders, and transfer these skills across other subjects. As children's progress across the scheme, the width between the lines they write on gradually decreases.

The features of Penpals Sassoon font include:

- The letters f, j, g and y are not looped.
- The lowercase letter 'k' is taught with a loop.
- Capital letters do not join to the next letter.
- Single letters have the exit flick.

Example formation:

Penpals: Example Letter Formation (without joins)

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

Penpals: Example Letter Formation (with joins)

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

Penpals: Joining Example

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz



Pen Licence:

Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 use pencil to write. Children will have the opportunity to start practising using a pen in Year 2 and can earn a 'pen licence' from Year 3 upwards. This allows pupils to use a handwriting pen in all subjects instead of pencil, at the discretion of the teacher. To obtain a pen licence, the teacher will enable children who demonstrate readiness through consistent letter formation, sizing and adherence to the handwriting scheme to sit a pen licence exam.

Assessment Questions:

- Are all letters formed correctly?
- Are letters consistently sized?
- Are the known joins used correctly?
- Are ascenders and descenders parallel and on the line?
- Are the spaces within and between words regular?
- Is good handwriting carried over into other areas of the curriculum?
- Is there an adequate pace of writing?

Equality of opportunity:

All of our children have equal access to handwriting lessons and to the resources available. We recognise that some children take longer to develop the necessary skills and we cater for those children by providing additional opportunities for skills development. Children with a physical disability are catered for, and progress is monitored, according to their individual action plans.