



HANDWRITING & PRESENTATION POLICY

Non-Statutory Policy (Biennial Review)

GOVERNORS' STANDARDS & CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Date next due for review by committee	Reviewed by committee	Any Changes YES/NO	Approved by Committee
	18 November 2020	Updated	18 November 2020
November 2022	3 October 2022	Updated	3 October 2022
September 2024			

Helmdon Primary School

Handwriting & Presentation Policy

Why is a handwriting policy important for a primary school?

Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Given effective teaching, handwriting can be mastered by most pupils by the time they are seven or eight years old enabling them, with practice, to go on to develop a faster and more mature hand ready for secondary school and adult life. The surest way to ensure consistent teaching and the development of legible, fluent joined handwriting throughout the school is to have a written policy agreed and put into practice by all staff.

Handwriting is a movement skill, children need to practise handwriting movements correctly and often. The first handwriting lessons are vital and the most important issue is to ensure that the children we teach learn to form the letters of the alphabet with the correct sequence of strokes from the beginning. The correct formation of all letters needs to become quite automatic and may require a lot of practice.

Suzanne Tiburtius of the National Handwriting Association

Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. If they have difficulty, this will limit fluency and inhibit the quality and quantity of their work. It is important that the child's handwriting becomes a skill that requires little effort and thought, so that creative and physical energy can be focused on the content of writing, rather than upon the act. We adhere to The British Dyslexia Association's recommendation that children learn the continuous cursive style. The key advantages are:

- By making each letter in one movement, children's hands develop a 'physical memory' of it, making it easier to produce the correct shape
- Because letters and words flow from left to right, children are less likely to reverse letters which are typically difficult (like b/d or p/q)
- There is a clearer distinction between capital letters and lower case
- The continuous flow of writing ultimately improves speed and spelling.

1 Aims and Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to set out a whole school approach to presentation and the teaching of handwriting in order to raise standards across the school and to ensure:

- A consistent approach to handwriting and presentation across the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One/Two.

With this policy, pupils will:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in the adopted cursive handwriting style.
- Develop flow and speed whilst writing, so that eventually the children are able to write fluently and with confidence.

2 Strategy for Implementation

2.1 Entitlement and curriculum provision

Handwriting is taught regularly. This may be in short, focused sessions or with the aid of a handwriting scheme/programme and may be linked with spelling, grammar or phonics objectives. Teaching will usually occur outside English lessons, although shared and guided writing also provides additional opportunities for the modelling and monitoring of handwriting.

2.2 Teaching and Learning

Handwriting is a skill which needs to be taught explicitly. Since handwriting is essentially a movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed style by the teacher is very important; it is not sufficient to require pupils to copy models from a published scheme or worksheet. Consistency in the attitudes displayed, the methods employed and the models provided is the key to effective learning. A mixture of whole class, small group and individual teaching is planned.

The role of the teacher:

- To follow the school policy to help each child develop legible and fluent handwriting
- To provide direct teaching and accurate modelling
- To provide resources and an environment which promotes good handwriting
- To observe pupils, monitor progress and determine targets for development.
- To ensure the cursive font is taught as a specific skill
- To ensure correct pencil hold and letter formation are taught from the beginning and handwriting is frequently linked with spelling
- To ensure the cursive font is displayed in classrooms to ensure familiarity with the style.

2.3 Continuity and Progression

Early Years

The emphasis at this stage is with movement rather than neatness. Letter formation (beginning with the correct entry point and then moving in the right direction) learned at this early stage becomes automatic and has a profound influence on later fluency and legibility. To aid movement, close attention is given to pencil grip, correct posture, the positioning of the paper and the organisation of the writing space. Teachers are vigilant to ensure that bad habits do not become ingrained and that the specific needs of left-handed pupils (for example, additional tracking and tracing of letters at the pre-writing stage) and those with special educational needs are met.

In the pre-communicative stage, pupils play with writing and these experiments are recognised and praised as an important stage in the child's understanding that marks on paper convey meaning. Pupils are given the opportunity to experiment with a range of writing materials and implements; a multi-sensory approach is used to help pupils feel the movement in the hand.

Key Stage 1

Building on the Foundation Stage, pupils at Key Stage 1 develop a legible style and begin to use cursive handwriting in Year One. This is dependent on ability not the age of each child. This is achieved in Year 1 by developing a comfortable and efficient pencil grip and by practising handwriting in conjunction with spelling and independent writing. Correct letter orientation, formation and proportion are taught in line with the school's agreed handwriting style. This continues in Year 2. It is expected that the majority of children will be joining by the end of Key Stage 1. Handwriting practice may be carried out in separate handwriting books or on sheets but is to be modelled and expected in all writing in all books.

Key Stage Two

The target for children in Key Stage Two is to produce a fluent, consistently formed style of fully cursive handwriting with equal spacing between the letters and words.

- Children will have regular handwriting sessions using appropriate prepared resources, in the agreed handwriting style. Handwriting practice may be carried out in separate handwriting books or on sheets but handwriting following the agreed handwriting scheme is expected to be used by pupils in all books and across all lessons.
- Children will write with pencils until the class teacher assesses that they are joining competently and consistently. In Key Stage 2, children will be able to earn a pen licence. They will then be given a handwriting pen to use.
- Once a child holds a pen licence, he/she will use a pen to complete the majority of class work, where appropriate using a fully cursive style.
- Pencils will be used in all maths work and for drawing and completion of diagrams in science
- All children in Key Stage Two will be encouraged to use the agreed cursive handwriting style in all lessons.

3 Presentation Guidance

It is essential that all children should have pride in their work. Pupils will learn that different levels of presentation are appropriate for different pieces of work and different circumstances. However, pupils are expected to:

- Look after exercise books and not draw or scribble in or on them
- Increasingly plan their work to make it look attractive and well presented
- Not use writing or drawing media that is not approved or not fit for purpose
- Use rulers to draw straight lines
- Set out, number and annotate work appropriately
- Cross through mistakes or editing alterations with a single line. Erasers should only be used very occasionally and with the express permission of an adult
- Children should write from the left margin across the page
- When using unlined paper, children will use a separate line guide to ensure neat presentation. These will be available in all classrooms.

3.1 Children's work

Book covers should indicate:

- Child's name
- Class
- Subject
- Children should not write on the covers of their books

Date of work and learning objectives in books:

- Full written date in all books except mathematics and science when the number date format will be used
- Date is written on the top line, left aligned and underlined with a ruler.
- Learning objectives should be written (or printed as appropriate) in all books for each piece of work, underlined with a ruler and aligned to the left of the page.
- For younger children, teachers are encouraged to work towards this standard as soon as children are able.

Underlining:

- All underlining should be completed with a ruler

Teachers are expected to:

- Ensure that classrooms are well equipped with the essential tools that will assist pupils to create work with a high presentational standard
- Organise the classroom in such a way that materials and resources are easily accessible
- Ensure that children look after resources and materials so that they learn to respect equipment and good value for money is assured.

4 Monitoring and review

We know Helmdon Primary School's Handwriting and Presentation Policy is effective if:

- A scrutiny of work confirms the appropriate development in handwriting skills
- Specific difficulties are addressed in the marking of handwriting tasks
- A scrutiny of work confirms that the presentation protocol is adhered to.

Monitoring will be undertaken by:

- The class teacher
 - The English Coordinator
-
- When undertaking scrutiny, co-ordinators will monitor all subjects for neat presentation and the use of cursive writing.