



Handwriting Policy

Spring 2014

1. Rationale

At Castleton C of E Primary School, all children are introduced to Cursive Handwriting from the start. We believe this raises standards in handwriting throughout the whole school, developing confidence, accuracy and fluency and improved presentation.

The rules of the Cursive Style help:

- to minimise confusion for the child as every letter starts on the line with an entry stroke and leads out with an exit stroke
- with the flow of Cursive Writing as letters naturally flow into each other, it is impossible to write separate letters without joining
- form spacing between words as the child develops whole word awareness
- develop a child's visual memory
- all children's writing skills regardless of academic ability
- to develop skills of punctuation and grammar

All children write with a pencil, although older pupils will use pens for a particular task or a special occasion.

1. Aims

- To provide equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve success in handwriting
- To produce clear, concise, legible handwriting
- To present work to a variety of audiences neatly
- To develop accuracy and fluency
- To help children recognise that handwriting is a form of communication and as such should be considered important in order for it to be effective
- To promote confidence and self-esteem
- To encourage children to take pride in their work
- To help children recognise that handwriting is a life-long skill that will be fundamental to all forms of written communication throughout their lives
- To display neatly presented work around the school as a model of excellence for others to aspire to

2. Development of learning and teaching handwriting

We have adopted the Kath Balcombe style of teaching cursive handwriting where by she uses the analogy of a forest. The children are encouraged to think of the following:

- Keep your halfway letters within the shaded area – the trees
- Make your tall letters rise above the shaded area into the sky
- Make your letters with tails fall below the shaded area – underneath the ground

EYFS

On entry, children are involved in a variety of activities to develop essential pre-writing skills in line with the Early Learning Goals of the Foundation Stage. They are encouraged to work towards a tripod grip.

Activities to develop gross motor control may include: rolling hoops and running with a hoop, ribbon movement, chalking and painting on a large scale.

Activities to develop fine motor control may include: sand, mark making trays and tools, tracing, colouring within guide lines and pictures, pattern work, using glue spreaders in small pots, painting with the tips of the fingers, cotton buds, plasticine and threading.

Children are introduced to actual letter formation in conjunction with the introduction of phonic skills. They are taught where to start the letter for ease of introduction of cursive script later.

Practice of particular High Frequency Words helps to develop good visual and writing habits e.g. 'the', 'and'. Usually by the end of the EYFS, all children will have been introduced to all letters of the alphabet and introduced to more independent writing. They use handwriting patterns to promote the use of cursive script. Children practise their names in cursive script by tracing over in the first instance and then underneath and then using motor memory.

Meeting for Parents

Parents are invited to attend a meeting for 'new' parents, held in the autumn term. This enables us to outline our rationale and engage their support in encouraging their child to practice correct letter formation at opportune moments at home.

They are each given a copy of our booklet 'Supporting Your Child with Handwriting' (See appendix 1.)

Year 1 and 2

As the children move to Year 1 the skills acquired in the Foundation Stage are continued, consolidating correct formation, concentration and accurate precision work.

The leading lines on individual letters are introduced in groups of similarly formed letters and practise of these takes place in short regular bursts. Sessions begin with a multisensory approach, where children use their 'magic finger pencils' in the air, on their hand, on their partners' back. They are also encouraged to verbalise the movements of their finger / pencil (e.g. "start on the line, all the way up, straight back down..." etc). The teacher then models writing on the board and the children are given the opportunity to practise their letters on whiteboards or paper. When using paper, all children write in pencil. Spellings are closely linked with handwriting activities, assisting the children with phonic skills required for successful reading. As the children progress through Year 1 and into Year 2, they are shown how to use the individual leading lines to join pairs and groups of letters.

Year 3-6

The Cursive style continues to develop through close links with the Literacy Framework. Handwriting is taught through a dedicated session and as fluency and accuracy develops, pupils are encouraged to write with an ink pen for special presentation.

All handwriting activities are undertaken as class activities for the following reasons:

- to develop effective and efficient pen hold
- to develop the habit of concentration which is crucial to good handwriting
- to encourage the development of cursive script, neatness and legibility
- to provide the class teacher with the opportunity to help assess pupil progress and monitor areas requiring reinforcement.

Children copy into their books, applying the same techniques, closely monitored by the Teacher.

Handwriting books have coloured lines to assist with accuracy and consistency in size and form, although other exercise books are either blank or have one line only. Where

pages are blank or when children write on to A4 paper, they are expected to use a line guide and paperclips to hold the guide in place. Using a variety of methods discourages dependency on the use of the tram lines.

Handwriting and Reading

In school, children are exposed to both cursive and print styles as well as commercial print. They develop awareness for reading in print and writing in cursive side by side in their learning, such as prompts around classrooms/school – lettering, labels on displays/teaching aids e.g. alphabet on tables and through teacher modelling of writing.

Resources

Parent information booklet (see appendix 1)

Teachers use the chosen handwriting joins (see appendix 2).

Suggestions for correct posture, pencil grip and paper position are taken from Kath Balcombes Handwriting File (see appendix 3).

Monitoring

The presentation of all work is monitored through work scrutinies.

Signed: Headteacher

Signed: Chair of Governors

Date:

Review: