

Cottesbrooke Infant School Handwriting policy
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HANDWRITING POLICY STATEMENT

WHY TEACH HANDWRITING?

Writing is vital to communicating in school, in public life and internationally. It enables pupils to express themselves creatively and imaginatively and to communicate with others effectively. Pupils learn to become enthusiastic and critical writers of stories, poetry and drama as well as non-fiction and media texts. Reading and writing forms the basis of all learning. Handwriting is crucial to being able to communicate effectively as a writer.

Taken from the National Curriculum Orders for English

AIMS

The teaching of Handwriting at Cottesbrooke Infant school is geared towards enabling each pupil to develop within their capabilities: not only the handwriting skills and enthusiasm required for later life, but also an enthusiasm and fascination for all types of writing.

We aim to teach Handwriting as an integral part of the writing curriculum. To fulfil this aim the development of Handwriting skills is included in each stage of the writing scheme of work.

We aim to increase pupil confidence in and enthusiasm for Handwriting so that they are able to write using correctly formed and joined writing that is both legible and enables pupils to write with increasing speed and fluency.

We aim to teach Handwriting skills using the National Literacy guidelines and in conjunction with phonic teaching.

We aim to promote the development of confident writers who can use their Handwriting skills competently in all areas of the curriculum.

We also aim to prepare children for life in the adult world where legible handwriting and writing is a basic skill of modern life.

We are continually aiming to raise the standards of achievement of the pupils in Cottesbrooke Infant School.

HANDWRITING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The Foundation Stage of education is concerned with the developing of key learning skills, which include early communication, literacy, and numeracy skills that will prepare young children for Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum and ensure that they will continue to flourish throughout their school years and beyond.

In terms of handwriting, this means that when we focus on the initial sounds of words, we will show them the formation of that letter.

The curriculum is governed by the Early Learning Goals, which establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage.

THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM AND THE NATIONAL LITERACY STRATEGY

The National Curriculum Order for Writing includes Handwriting and describes what must be taught in each Key Stage. Cottesbrooke Infant School follows the National Literacy framework, which provides detailed guidance for the implementation of the Orders and ensures continuity and progression in the teaching of Handwriting.

Every teacher in Cottesbrooke Infant School has a copy of the National Literacy Framework.

In Early years the curriculum is guided by the Early Learning Goals, which mirror the Reception Learning objectives in the NLS framework.

PLANNING

Long term planning is based on the yearly teaching programme as set out in the framework.

Medium term planning is carried out half-termly. The main teaching objectives are selected from the NLS teaching programme and the suggested sheets in the framework are used. At this point links are made with Jolly phonics and writing in the framework. At Cottesbrooke Infant school we recognise the need to block related work into units and to revisit topics regularly to revise and consolidate skills and extend them. Every objective in the yearly teaching programme is covered by the end of the Key Stage.

Short term planning is carried out weekly. These plans include learning objectives for Handwriting, the whole class work and the guided groups as well as resources to be used and differentiation.

The medium and short term planning is monitored by the Literacy co-ordinator and the senior management team.

CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

Handwriting is taught as a separate skill but every opportunity is taken to write in every area of the curriculum. We try to identify the handwriting possibilities at the planning stage and to make links with the other areas of the curriculum that we are teaching. We also draw the children's attention to the links between Handwriting and other curriculum areas so that the children do not see Handwriting as an isolated subject.

LINKS WITH ICT

ICT is used to develop letter formation and letter recognition skills where appropriate – some examples of this are 2Handwrite Animated dictionary and Star Spell.

All classes are provided with interactive whiteboards which are used to demonstrate handwriting skills and enable children to practice skills.

PERSONAL SOCIAL HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP LINKS WITH HANDWRITING

There are many opportunities to develop PSHE and Citizenship in Handwriting. Through the literacy strategy, they have many opportunities to develop these skills.

- Working in pairs, small groups and as part of a whole class group discussing work Handwriting helps social development by allowing them the opportunity to help each other with letter formation and recognition, share their opinions on things and to explain their views. It also develops the concept of belonging to a group and working as a team to collectively produce good handwriting.
- Moral development is developed through helping pupils to recognise when it is right to help or be helped by other pupils.

PROBLEM SOLVING AND THINKING SKILLS

In Handwriting pupils problem solving and thinking skills are developed by asking children to use the handwriting rules taught when joining other letters. Pupils should be given the opportunity to work individually and collaboratively with others to solve problems and improve their own learning

TEACHING METHODS AND APPROACHES

Lessons generally follow the NLS format with shared reading, and whole class work followed by guided group work) and a plenary. Both the work on the big book and the shared work give ample opportunities to teach Handwriting strategies. The activities in the PIPS booklet can be used during the shared word work time to make phonic sessions more interactive and the writing of the sounds in joined writing will be encouraged in these sessions. In Reception the aim is to have prepared the children by the end of the year for a daily one-hour literacy session (Refer to Introduction in the Framework for more details). Whole class handwriting practice may also take place in Key Stage 1.

The teaching of Handwriting at Cottesbrooke Infant School provides opportunities for:

Group work

- Paired work
- Whole class teaching
- Individual work
- Group work
- Multi-sensory teaching

It is crucial that the teaching of Handwriting takes place in the context of meaningful Handwriting activities. These will include tracing activities, hand-eye coordination activities, air writing, and writing on lines.

Joined handwriting will be encouraged in Year 2 and the children will be encouraged to use their knowledge of joined writing in their own writing. In Year children will begin to explore some early joins related to their phonic work

Handwriting is an integral part of work covered in all subjects and should be developed in ways that are appropriate to each subject

Pupils engage in

- The development of Handwriting strategies
- Written work
- Handwriting activities
- Games which involve writing
- Problem solving
- Consolidation of basic skills
- Brain Gym
- Fine and Gross motor skills practice
- Teodorescu Handwriting Scheme

An awareness of phonics should be used to aid the development of Handwriting. The grouping of pupils should be appropriate to each activity. A link will be made with the handwriting scheme – the phonics taught will be used as a basis for more formal handwriting practice. ‘A Hand for spelling’ book is used as a basis for letter

formation and this will be linked to 'Phonics and Spelling (literacy Targets)' and Jolly Phonics.

At Cottesbrooke Infant School we recognise the importance of establishing a secure foundation in developing phonic skills and Handwriting strategies. We endeavour to set work that is challenging, motivating and pleasurable.

ORGANISATION

Shared word work is done on a daily basis and these sessions last approximately fifteen minutes. Independent group activities take place during the following twenty minutes. The children are taught in mixed ability classes. When children start in Reception the organisation is more flexible building up to a daily one-hour lesson by the summer term. Differentiation is built into the daily planning and will provide pupils with activities suited to their individual needs. Differentiation will be by both planned input and the outcome of the activities.

DISPLAY

We recognise the important role display has in the teaching and learning of Handwriting by having all types of written work displayed in the school. There is a particular emphasis on interactive displays and the children are encouraged to read write and to respond to them. Every class has displays that encourage the children to read and spell words. Captions will be both handwritten and computer generated.

ASSESSMENT AND RECORD KEEPING

At Cottesbrooke Infant school we are continually assessing our pupils and recording their progress. We see assessment as an integral part of the teaching process and endeavour to make our assessment purposeful, allowing us to match the correct level of work to the needs of the pupils, thus benefiting the pupils and ensuring progress. Assessment is carried out on three levels.

Short-term assessments are an informal part of every lesson and are closely matched to the teaching objectives. These tend not to be recorded because they are for the teacher's immediate attention and action: however pertinent comments may be recorded on the back of the short – term planning sheets.

Medium term assessments are carried out every term. The purpose of these assessments is to review and to record the progress the pupils have made in relation to the key objectives. Children's progress through the NLS Handwritings is recorded as part of their writing assessment, Assessments take into account target setting documentation and government guidance. A sample of an assessed piece of writing is added to a child's profile folder every term. Reception uses the E Profile to record progress in Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL). The Nursery uses NFER Signposts Assessment which is linked to the Early Learning Goals.

Handwriting is assessed annually as part of the end of year writing assessment.

E Profile is completed in Reception. End of key stage SATs and teacher assessment take place in Year Two.

Children's progress is recorded every term through sampling their written work. This is updated regularly throughout the year as appropriate.

REPORTING

Targets are set for each pupil biannually in Key Stage 1 and shared with parents. All parents receive an annual written report on which there is a summary of their child's effort and progress in writing, including handwriting, over the year. This progress is also discussed as part of the parent's evenings that are held three times a year.

At the end of Key stage 1 each pupil's level of achievement against national standards is included as part of their annual written report. Writing records, including handwriting, and SATS results are sent to the junior school and discussion takes place between the staff of the two schools regarding the progress of individual children.

RESOURCES

Resources for the delivery of the Handwriting curriculum are stored in classrooms, each year base and in a central store. Each child in Year one and Year two has access to a whiteboard where they can also try out the formation of their joined writing. All classes have an interactive whiteboard. All resources are chosen to avoid stereotyping of race or gender.

Cottesbrooke Infant School uses a variety of published material to facilitate the teaching of Handwriting and recognises the need for a variety of published texts to aid the teaching of Handwriting. The Jolly Phonics and Jolly Grammar books support the whole class work and are used alongside a variety of other published material that is available for the teachers. Materials are constantly updated as new and relevant items become available. The Literacy post holder orders new resources after consultation with the staff.

Resources include

- A wide variety of different types of Handwriting material including, worksheets, displays, personal dictionaries, try-myself cards.
- A hand for Spelling by Charles Cripps – upon which the handwriting is based.
- A range of games that include handwriting or letter recognition.
- Jolly Phonics / Grammar
- Computer programs

- Spelling and Phonics, Learning Targets published by Stanley Thornes
- Teodorescu Perceptuo Motor programme

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

As a staff we endeavour to maintain an awareness of, and to provide for equal opportunities for all our pupils in Handwriting. We aim to take into account cultural background, gender and Special Needs, both in our teaching attitudes and in the published materials we use with our pupils. It is the responsibility of each class teacher to ensure that children of both sexes and all cultural backgrounds should have equal experiences and encouragement and are entitled to a broad and balanced programme of activities.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Wherever possible we aim to fully include SEN pupils in the daily literacy lesson so that they can benefit from the emphasis on word-work, guided and independent Handwriting activities and in participating with other children in demonstrating and explaining their strategies for Handwriting.

Where necessary teachers will, in consultation with the SENCO, draw up an IEP for a child. If a child's needs are particularly severe they will work on an individualised programme written in consultation with the appropriate staff. When planning teachers will try to address the child's needs through simplified or modified tasks or the use of some support staff. Equipment may have to be adapted to meet special needs. Teodorescu Perceptuo Motor programme will be used where appropriate to improve hand-eye coordination and ability to write legibly.

Where appropriate a Group Educational Plan may be developed with common objectives and learning targets for a group : for example a fine motor skills group.

At Cottesbrooke Infant school we do not make the assumption that a child with special educational needs in another curriculum area will necessarily have particular difficulties with, or a talent for, Handwriting. Neither do we believe that a child with a sound ability in some areas will not have a special educational need in Handwriting.

CONTINUITY AND PROGRESSION

The Handwriting curriculum is ongoing throughout Key Stage One and cannot be taught in solely in blocked units. Each child will be assessed on entry to nursery or school and will begin the Handwriting curriculum at a point that is appropriate to their ability. They will then progress through the Handwriting curriculum as a class, in groups, individually - in shared, guided and individual times and at a pace

that is appropriate for their individual needs. The junior school will be informed of the Key Stage One Handwriting curriculum; and samples of work will be forwarded to the Junior School.

HOMEWORK

Children are given literacy homework (which may include a Handwriting task) as well as a book they have chosen. The amount of homework set will take approximately 20 - 30 minutes a week. We encourage the teachers to set work which takes into account the home context.

SCHEME OF WORK

Pupils will work at levels appropriate to their ability throughout the key stage. Handwriting work follows the order as laid out in Jolly Phonics / Grammar, supported by Teodorescu Perceptuo Motor programme and Learning Targets Phonics and Spelling – (published by Stanley Thornes). Pupils will progress through the scheme at their own pace.