



The Village Federation of Carsington & Hopton and Kirk Ireton Primary Schools



HANDWRITING AND PRESENTATION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

At The Village Federation we are committed to enable pupils to achieve a high standard of handwriting and neat presentation in their written work. We believe that well-formed handwriting and the quality presentation of written work helps to raise standards as the pupils take pride in and have a sense of ownership of their work.

We teach a Continuous Cursive handwriting style throughout the school in order to benefit children in the areas of both spelling and writing. Continuous Cursive handwriting presents a fluid style that is easy to learn and is neat, legible and fast.

When using the Continuous Cursive style, each letter within a word is formed without taking the pencil off the paper and consequently each word is formed in one flowing movement. With the flow of Continuous Cursive writing letters naturally flow into each other; it is impossible to write separate letters without joining. By making each letter in one movement, children's hands develop a 'physical memory' of it, making it easier to produce the correct shape. As 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). Children more quickly form appropriate spacing between words as the child develops whole word awareness. There is a clearer distinction between capital letters and lower case and the continuous flow of writing ultimately improves speed and spelling as common letter strings and spelling patterns can be retained as automatic movements within the child's muscle memory.

Handwriting is a motor activity (a movement stored in the body, rather than a conscious memory) and children need to practise handwriting movements correctly and often. The skill of handwriting needs to be explicitly taught.

The features of our Continuous Cursive style of handwriting are as follows;
(see Appendix 1 for handwriting examples)

- Each letter starts on the line with a lead in stroke
- The child keeps the pencil on the paper for the whole word, giving a very fluent style

AIMS

As a school our aims in teaching handwriting are that the pupils will:

- Experience coherence and continuity in learning and teaching across the School
- Develop a recognition and appreciation of pattern and line
- Learn the conventional ways of forming letter shapes, both lower case and capitals
- Develop a fluent, comfortable, legible, joined handwriting style.
- Understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly
- Take pride in the presentation of work, developing handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement.
- Be able to write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.

To develop a fluent, legible style of writing, children are taught to:

- hold a pencil comfortably; promoting a legible style that encourages writing from left to right, from top to bottom of the page and starting and finishing letters correctly
- develop a consistent size and shape of letters and a regularity of spacing between letters and words
- develop greater control and fluency as they become increasingly confident.

As a school we will promote continuous cursive handwriting and model our high expectations of the neat presentation of work by:

- providing direct teaching and accurate modelling of the agreed continuous cursive style
- adopting a common approach using continuous fully cursive handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays / resources
- providing the appropriate equipment and environment to facilitate good handwriting and presentation

IMPLEMENTATION

Entitlement and curriculum provision

Handwriting is taught regularly through short, focused sessions and may be linked with spelling, grammar or phonics objectives. Teaching generally occurs outside Literacy lessons, although shared and guided writing also provides additional opportunities for the modelling and monitoring of handwriting.

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. We use the Collins Primary Focus Handwriting Scheme across the school as guidance.

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.

The Learning Environment

Across the school, suitable materials are available for pupils to work at their own tables. Pupils will work at tables of an appropriate height and will be encouraged to use good posture for writing with a straight back and both feet resting on the floor.

Throughout all Key stages teachers display both handwritten and word processed work to give a high profile to developing a neat, legible cursive style.

Continuity and Progression

Foundation Stage

The emphasis at this stage is with movement rather than neatness. Letter formation (starting at the right 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. Pupils are to be taught to use lead-in strokes as soon as they are ready for letter formation. (For agreed letter formation please see Appendix 1). 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. (See Appendix 2 for activities to support the development of gross and fine motor control)

Key Stage One

Building on the Foundation Stage, pupils at Key Stage One develop a legible style and begin to use continuous cursive handwriting by starting to join their letters. This is dependent on ability not the age of the child. This is achieved 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.

Key Stage Two

Children in Key Stage Two refine their handwriting to develop a fluent, consistently formed style of continuous 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, or specialist handwriting books. Children will write with pencils until the class teacher assesses that they are joining competently and consistently. They will then be given a handwriting pen with the aim that by Year Six all children will have progressed to using a handwriting pen. Children will use a pen to complete the majority of class work, where appropriate using a continuous cursive style. Pencils will be used in Numeracy or for drawing and completion of diagrams.

PRESENTATION GUIDANCE

It is essential that all children should have pride in their work and that it is set out well. Children must be encouraged to use a neat, cursive style in all written work, except Numeracy.

- All work must begin with the date. In Literacy this must be written in the following way: Monday 2nd September 2013. In all other subjects the short date can be written in the following format: 2.9.13.
- The date should be written on the left on the top line and underlined (not in the margin). The next line should be missed and an appropriate title should be written on the left hand side. This should be underlined.
- Underlining should be completed with a ruler.
- Children should write from the margin to the edge of the page.
- Work should be ruled off at the start of the following lesson, leaving the teacher room to comment on the work as detailed in the marking policy.
- Children will be encouraged to use one line to correct mistakes.
- Rubbers will be used within reason to correct pencil work.
- Criteria for presentation of work will be discussed prior to commencement of work.
- Pictures should be coloured in pencil crayons or plastic crayons. Felt pens should not be used in exercise books.
- When squared paper is used for Numeracy 1 digit is written in each box and a line is left between each sum.
- In Numeracy an eraser can be used at the teacher's discretion.
- Teachers are explicit about different types of handwriting, for example the use of legible jottings for note-taking or the use of best handwriting for presentation.

INCLUSION

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and a specific individual or group programme is drawn up in consultation with the SEN co-ordinator. Thicker triangular pencils, pencil grips and wider lines will be used by children experiencing problems writing, alongside other activities to develop their fine motor skills. (See Appendix 2 for activities to support the development of gross and fine motor control)

All teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision:

- paper should be positioned to the left for right handed pupils and to the right for left-handed pupils and slanted to suit the individual in either case;
- pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision;
- pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side;
- left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child, so that they are not competing for space;
- extra practice with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before pupils write from left-to-right automatically.

Teachers are alert to the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when they are modelled by a right-handed teacher. Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

THE USE OF ICT

The growth in the use of word processing and desktop publishing has increased pupils' awareness of the importance of presentation and the variety of fonts available. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate a range of fonts and to select the most appropriate to suit the particular purpose and needs of the reader.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS AND CARERS

The Foundation Stage staff play an important role in communicating this at an early stage, for example, to ensure that parents are informed and encouraged to offer good models to their children by using only capital letters for the beginning of their names, practising drawing patterns together, playing joining up games which encourage left to right directionality.

All members of staff (including teaching assistants, supply teachers and student teachers) are provided with appropriate handwriting models (see Appendix 1) and are expected to promote the agreed handwriting style by their own example.

Parental workshops held to advise parents on the curriculum will include the school policy for the teaching of handwriting.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This will be undertaken by the class teacher and will also be assessed as part of each term's literacy writing assessments.

When undertaking work scrutiny, staff will monitor all subjects for neat presentation and the use of cursive writing.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed in line with the school's policy review programme.

APPENDIX 1

This is how we write our letters...

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

*The quick brown fox jumps
over the lazy dog. Baa baa
black sheep, have you any
wool? Yes sir, yes sir, three
bags full.*

exit

difficulty

psychic

sticky

abdicate

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

XYZ 0123456789 áèîõû

APPENDIX 2

Activities and exercises to develop Gross Motor Control:

Gross Motor Control is the term used to describe the development of controlled movements of the whole body, or limbs such as the legs or arms. Of particular importance in relation to handwriting is the development of good posture and balance. Activities to support the development of Gross Motor Control include:

- Dancing and skipping
- Running and jumping to music
- Use of small apparatus e.g. throwing, rolling, catching, kicking and bouncing balls
- Building with large-scale construction kits
- Hammering
- Consolidate the vocabulary of movement by talking about movements such as, going round and round, making curves, springing up and sliding down, making long, slow movements or quick, jumpy movements
- Make large movements in the air with arms, hands and shoulders with dance ribbons, use music

Activities and exercises to develop Fine Motor Control:

Fine Motor Control is the term used to describe smaller movements, usually of the hand and fingers (or of the feet and toes). Activities and exercises to develop Fine Motor Control include:

- Folding paper
- Cutting out shapes from paper and card
- Fitting things into frames like geometric shapes
- Model making
- Building and stacking bricks
- Screw toys and wood working tools
- Pegboards
- Modelling with malleable materials like Playdoh, plasticene and clay
- Drawing in sand and sand and water play in general, including sieving, pouring and picking up toys using tools e.g. fishing rods and cranes
- Sewing and weaving
- Chopping and peeling when cooking
- Develop the pincer movement by using tweezers to pick up sequins, beads and feathers, sprinkling glitter, sand and salt
- Scribbling and drawing with chalk, dry wipe pens, felt tip pens and paints on small, large boards and easels and on small and large paper
- Playing with tactile and magnetic letters
- Puzzles
- Games and miming involving finger and wrist movement e.g. finger puppets
- Use increasingly finer tools to make and continue patterns of lines