



# Bishopstone C.E. Primary School

Bishopstone Church of England School, Bishopstone, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN6 8PW

## **Bishopstone Handwriting Policy**

### **Aims: Handwriting in the classroom**

The skill of handwriting needs to be taught. It is not a natural skill that will grow and develop like speaking or walking. Handwriting is a motor activity. A movement stored in the body rather than in the conscious memory. Our hands and fingers control the movements involved in handwriting. It is in our hands that the kinaesthetic memory lies. This controls the direction and shape of each letter. An effective handwriting policy is based on a style that is quick and easy to learn. It should be neat, legible and fast. Pupils should eventually develop the ability to produce letters without thinking. An automatic style releases the brain to concentrate on other ideas i.e. spelling, grammar, syntax, style and content. At Bishopstone we use Penpals handwriting script to support our teaching of handwriting. Handwriting should be taught alongside phonic and spelling knowledge at all stages.

***Effective teaching of handwriting can only be achieved through modelling. Teachers must demonstrate letter formation and joins regularly and children must practice by carefully copying and repeating. It is important to observe children writing to ensure they are forming letters correctly.***

Handwriting is a taught skill that develops at different rates for different children. 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, making a 'best copy' for presentation and fast, fluent and legible writing across the curriculum.

### **Handwriting Principles**

- Handwriting is taught explicitly, in short, frequent sessions. *It should be modelled by the teacher then supervised.* Children should be self/peer assessing, looking for consistency
- Where possible, it should be linked to phonic and spelling patterns. This will help with handwriting and with the 'muscle memory' of spellings
- When ready, pupils should be practising on the lines they are going to use in their writing books, not on handwriting guidelines
- High expectations of writing are to be reinforced. Children must repeat work that is not satisfactory
- From Summer Term Yr3 children can gain a 'pen licence' for correct formation of letters, consistent fluidity and correct joins. This is re-set at the beginning of each year
- Teachers need to model good handwriting at all times, e.g. when writing on the whiteboard and when marking books.

At Bishopstone CE we introduce joined up handwriting at an early stage of a child's development: from the end of year 1 upwards, when we deem the child is ready to learn and original standalone letters are formed correctly.

### **Advantages of joining**

- The motor memory of the child's hand and fingers helps them to spell as each word becomes one movement and not many

***Bishopstone CE school promotes Christian values and fosters an environment of spirituality, creativity and respect where everyone is valued and each child can achieve their full potential.***

June 2017



# Bishopstone C.E. Primary School

Bishopstone Church of England School, Bishopstone, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN6 8PW

- Children are able to write at a faster pace
- Lessens the chance of reversing letters
- Spaces between words become more obvious
- Upper and lower case letters are clearer.

The Penpals handwriting scheme follows the National Curriculum guidelines for handwriting – **see Appendix 1**

## Handwriting Tools

Throughout their time in school, children use a range of tools for different purposes and styles of handwriting including:

- A wide range of tools and media for mark-making in the EYFS.
- Whiteboard pens throughout the school.
- Fingers when writing on the interactive whiteboard.
- Art supplies including coloured pens and pencils for posters, displays and artwork.
- Sharp pencils for most writing until a pen licence is awarded.
- A handwriting pen for when they sustain a good level of presentation.

Handwriting is always introduced and practised in the *Penpals* Practice Books and on lined paper so that children quickly learn about letter orientation including ascenders and descenders. As children's fine motor skills improve and their letter formation or joining becomes increasingly accurate, the width between the lines they write on gradually decreases.

## 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 F1 and F2).
- Correct letter formation is taught, practised, applied and consolidated (EYFS F1/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).
- Once the joins are secure, a slope is introduced in order to support increased speed and fluency (Y5).
- Children are introduced to different ways of joining in order that they can develop their own preferred personal style (Y6).

The handwriting joins are broken down in to a succession of learning steps throughout the years. **See Appendix 2.** Due to the nature of mixed year classes, teachers decide on the order of lessons, but try to match as closely to the schemes logical pattern as they can.

## Inclusion

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and provision will be made for through interventions. Teachers of children, whose handwriting is limited, by problems with fine motor skills, should liaise with the SENCO to develop a programme designed for the individual child.

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 left-to-right automatically.

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

***Bishopstone CE school promotes Christian values and fosters an environment of spirituality, creativity and respect where everyone is valued and each child can achieve their full potential.***

June 2017



# Bishopstone C.E. Primary School

Bishopstone Church of England School, Bishopstone, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN6 8PW

## Review

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually.

Policy approved by Emma Lindsay

Designation Headteacher

Signed-

Date June 2017

Review            June 2019

***Bishopstone CE school promotes Christian values and fosters an environment of spirituality, creativity and respect where everyone is valued and each child can achieve their full potential.***

June 2017