



# Handwriting policy and information leaflet

Policy statement Autumn 2018  
Date for review Autumn 2021



## Aims

At Wirksworth Federation of Infant Schools we aim for our children to develop a fluent, legible and dexterous handwriting style using continuous cursive letters that leads to producing letters and words automatically in independent writing.

Our aim is to ensure children experience continuity in the learning and teaching of handwriting across all school years and are encouraged to develop their handwriting with a sense of achievement and pride.

## National guidance and progression of skills

Across the Federation we use guidance from the National Curriculum 2014 and the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) to help in the effective teaching of handwriting.

### Handwriting in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Throughout Reception children will be given regular opportunities to develop their handwriting by:

- Drawing lines and shapes.
- Manipulating objects with control, e.g. play-dough.
- Re-tracing lines with control.
- Engaging in activities requiring hand-eye coordination.
- Using one handed tools and equipment.
- Developing their fine motor skills through activities such as cutting.
- Developing their gross motor skills through large scale movements.

### Handwriting in Year 1

Throughout Year 1 children will be given regular opportunities to practise their handwriting by:

- Forming lower case letters to the correct size relative to one another.
- Forming lower case letters and capital letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.
- Developing the right posture in order to write correctly.
- Understanding which letters belong to which handwriting groups.
- Making links with spelling and phonics.
- Starting to use cursive strokes to join letters.
- Understanding the vocabulary related to handwriting, e.g. ascenders, descenders.

### Handwriting in Year 2

Throughout Year 2 children will be given regular opportunities to practise their handwriting by:

- Use cursive strokes to join letters.
- Understand which letters have an ascender and which letters have a descender.
- Write capital letters of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case.
- Use spacing between words that reflect the size of the letters.
- Developing the right posture in order to write correctly.

### Assessment of handwriting

Teachers assess handwriting half termly and note progress against the relevant learning objectives outlined in the National Curriculum 2014 and the EYFSP and from these assessments individual child targets are determined. Next steps for handwriting may also be recorded when staff mark books in line with the 'tickled pink' and 'green for growth' principles outlined in the Federation Marking and Feedback policy.

### Correct posture

Children are taught to sit correctly at a table holding a pencil comfortably and correctly ensuring:

- The table reaches to below the elbow.
- Feet are kept flat on the floor.
- The chair is pulled in close to the table.
- The child's back is straight and they are sat right back in their chair.

### How you can help your child at home

As part of a valuable home / school partnership we encourage parents/carers when writing with their children to practise and model cursive letter formation with them.

A copy of our federation cursive alphabet is shown below.



### Personalised learning

Left-handed children are sat to the left of right handed children to avoid their arms bumping each other. Left-handed children sit with their body and paper at a slant to the right. This enables them to see their pencil tip, prevents children smudging their work with their writing hand and allows the pencil to move more freely. Some children are also provided with different tools to support their handwriting development, e.g. pencil grips, a sloping surface or a thick triangular pencil.

For children who need more support with their handwriting appropriate provision is implemented and detailed in their Individual Education Plan (IEP).

### Pencil grip

All children are encouraged to develop a good pencil grip which allows controlled movements of the pencil.

A good pencil grip demonstrates the following:

- A pencil gripped with index finger and thumb with the nib pointing away.
- Middle finger used to support the underside of the pencil.

### The learning environment

We provide an environment which is conducive to good handwriting by ensuring that:

- Tables and chairs of a suitable size and height are available for children to use.
- Adequate space and good lighting is in place.
- The atmosphere is calm and purposeful.
- Materials are accessible, suitable, varied and of good quality.

Children are introduced to a variety of writing tools and equipment as they progress through the school such as pencils, felt pens, handwriting pens, biro, chalk, crayons and paper of different colours, shapes, textures and types.

Children are encouraged to start handwriting using a soft pencil. When fine motor skills have been established a handwriting pen is used.

Purposeful displays of the school agreed cursive handwriting style are shown in all classrooms.

Each classroom has an informal writing area, equipped with a variety of materials and writing tools, to encourage and motivate children to write for their own pleasure and enjoyment, and to give them opportunity to practise handwriting skills.

### Teaching of handwriting

- Cursive handwriting is taught and modelled consistently by individual class teachers in short, discrete and frequent sessions two to three times per week.
- Handwriting practise is done in specific handwriting exercise books and when ready children progress to practising their handwriting on lines the same as those in their writing / topic books.
- Staff regularly model cursive handwriting, e.g. when writing on the board and marking children's books.
- Where possible, handwriting practise especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Year 1 is linked to phonics and spelling patterns.

### Monitoring and review

The Headteacher monitors and reports to the Governing Body on the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis and makes recommendations for further improvements.

The policy will be reviewed in accordance with the Federation's monitoring and review cycle. The Headteacher and/or Governing Body may, however, review the policy earlier than this in response to new regulations or if they receive recommendations on how the policy might be improved.