



Handwriting Policy

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Signed	
Position HEADTEACHER	CHAIR OF GOVERNORS
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HANDWRITING POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Aims

- 1 to know the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively
- 2 to write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed by:
 - having a correct pencil grip
 - knowing that all letters start from the bottom except *h*, *w*, *o*, *r*, which finish at the top
 - forming all letters correctly
 - knowing the size and orientation of letters

Teaching Time

There should be a **minimum** of 3 x 10 handwriting lessons each week as well as time to practice until children have mastered the art of joined handwriting.

Children who find handwriting difficult should receive daily intervention e.g. Write from the Start, Speed Up interventions.

Model Used

Rational

- 1 Cursive writing is an integral part of the multisensory technique enabling pupils to make the automatic symbol-sound relationship for spelling.
- 2 It aids the left to right movements through each word across the page.
- 3 It enables pupils to the pen from the paper. Thus it helps sequencing and prevents reversals, inversions and omissions.
- 4 It aids legibility, especially for those with motor and spatial difficulties, providing a motor training programme.
- 5 It will eventually help them to increase the speed of their writing.
- 6 It helps some pupils to link the spoken word with the written symbol for the first time. If the sounds are taught correctly they can actually write down exactly what they are saying, in the order that they are saying it, and spell regularly spelled words correctly.
- 7 “Motor organisation disability rather than poor visual discrimination is the main dysfunction underlying poor hand writing. On the other hand it does appear that intensive instruction can help a child with motor organisation difficulties to write adequately.” (Wedell, K. 1973)

Bradfield Dungworth Primary School uses the Sheffield Cursive Handwriting Scheme with the following letter formation as recommended by Dyslexia Action teachers.

Cursive Handwriting Scheme has particular benefits for children with spellings and reading difficulties.

Lower case 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*

Capitals

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

Numbers

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

THE BASIC LETTER SHAPES

- 1 These are the body letters *a c e i m n o r s u v w x*
- 2 These letters have sticks (or ascenders) *b d h k l t f*
- 3 These letters have tails (or descenders) *g j p q y*

In the following section there are two points to remember:

- a) An underlined letter indicates the name of the letter e.g. *i*
- b) A letter in brackets indicates the sound of the letter e.g. (*i*)

Paper

As motor skills increase then the size of the writing should decrease. Children should start writing in A4 plain books then as their handwriting improves then lined paper should be introduced.

For word processing use the Font CCW cursive writing 4. This is found on the desk top. Copy and paste into 'join it'.

The teacher should give a model, written with the pupil watching, for the pupil to copy.

When a pupil has learned several letters, these can be combined with the new letter for practice.

e.g. with *i, t, p*

Ask the children to write the letter in the air, on the table, on their hand, on their partner's back, with their eyes shut.

Ask them to write a line of letters and then put a tick above their best one or look at their partners and put a tick against the best one.

Remember to use the Read, write, Inc mnemonic for the letters and say 'get ready to go'

<i>a</i>	Round the apple, down the leaf	<i>j</i>	Down his body, curl and dot	<i>s</i>	Slither down the snake
<i>b</i>	Down the laces to the heel, round the toe	<i>k</i>	Down the kangaroo's body, tail and leg	<i>t</i>	Down the tower, across the tower
<i>c</i>	Curl around the caterpillar	<i>l</i>	Down the long leg	<i>u</i>	Down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle
<i>d</i>	Round his bottom, up his tall neck, down to his feet	<i>m</i>	Maisie, mountain, mountain	<i>v</i>	Down a wing, up a wing
<i>e</i>	Lift off the top and scoop out the egg	<i>n</i>	Down Nobby, over his net	<i>w</i>	Down, up, down, up
<i>f</i>	Down the stem and draw the leaves	<i>o</i>	All around the orange	<i>x</i>	Down the arm and leg and repeat the other side
<i>g</i>	Round her face, down her hair and give her a curl	<i>p</i>	Down the plait and over the pirate's face	<i>y</i>	Down a horn, up a horn and under his head
<i>h</i>	Down the head to the hooves and over his back	<i>q</i>	Round her head, up past her earrings and down her hair	<i>z</i>	Zig - zag - zig
<i>i</i>	Down the body, dot for the head	<i>r</i>	Down his back, then curl over his arm		

Making the Letters

Every letter has an approach stroke and a carry-on stroke. This means that letters can be joined as soon as the pupil has learned two or three letters.

It also gives the directional flow from left to right and the same starting point for every letter and word. When writing on lined paper, the pupil should be asked to place the pencil or pen on the line to start, every time, with an approach stroke. This is invaluable for the pupil whose writing floats off all over the page. The use of this “anchoring point” helps to overcome this problem very quickly. When teaching the approach stroke we will say “Smile in” The letters should finish with a ‘flick’ to facilitate joining later and we will say ‘Smile out’.

Reception

To develop motor skills use ‘Write Dance’ and ‘Squiggle whilst you Wiggle’ materials in the first term of school.

All children should write in A4 books. When children are ready, children should be introduced to lines. These lines should be well spaced (about 2cms apart). Children who struggle can use printed paper with dotted lines to help letter size and formation.

Learn individual letters with the approach stroke and flick, using the RWI handwriting rhyme. Use cursive in displays.

Use dough disco regularly to strengthen hand coordination and muscle strength alongside provision of tweezers, funky fingers activities in all areas of continuous provision

Year 1

Children should start the year as above. **When they are ready** they should move on to wide lined exercise books. Children who struggle can use paper with dotted lines to aid letter sizes.

Year 2

The majority of children should be ready to start the year in narrow lined books. For some children they will need to continue on wide lines books until ready.

All children should be allowed to use unlined paper *from time to time* so that they can practise to apply skills and consider issues of presentation and aesthetics.

Teaching Sequence

- hand and finger strength
- physical preparation
- tracing
- patterns
- over teacher’s writing (highlighter)
- under teacher’s writing (directly under words - write in large letters, leave large spaces between words)
- independence

Techniques for teaching letter formation

- model good cursive handwriting all the time
- demonstrate
- talk through the process
- encourage children to verbalise the process
- children form letter in the air
- finger trace over tactile letters
- write over highlighter pen (or dotted letters)
- draw round templates

- write in sand with finger or stick
- write with chalk on chalkboard
- wax resist letters
- form letters with pegs on pegboard
- form letters with beads in plasticine
- finger trace
- finger trace the outline of letters on the back of the person in front of you

Mistakes and Corrections

to correct a mistake, a clear line is drawn to cross out the word e.g. ~~favrite~~ = favourite

Rubbers to be used only when necessary by the teachers.

Getting ready to write

Seating and posture

- chair and table should be at a comfortable height
- the table should support the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor
- encourage children to sit up straight and not slouch
- the height of the chair should be such that the thighs are horizontal and feet flat on the floor
- **tables should be free of clutter**
- rooms should be well lit
- left handed pupils should sit on the left of their partners

Pencil grip

- children should write with a pencil (or pen in English when awarded a pen licence). Pencils should be reasonably sharp
- A tripod grip is the most efficient way of holding a pencil

For right handers

- Hold lightly between the thumb and forefinger about 3cm away from the point.
- The paper should be placed to the right tilted slightly to the left
- Use the left hand to steady the paper

For left handers

- Hold lightly between thumb and forefinger resting on the first knuckle of the middle finger
- Hold about 3cm from the tip
- The hand should be kept below the writing line
- The paper should be tilted slightly to the right at about 20 - 30°
- Use the right hand to steady the paper

NB It is very important that a right handed child is NOT seated on the left hand side of a left handed child as their elbows will collide!

Assessment

Senior leaders should monitor children's writing and presentation in books regularly (at least half termly).

The following should be considered:

- Is the writing generally legible?

- Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
- Are the joins made correctly?
- Are the spaces between the letters, words and lines appropriate?
- Is the size of the writing appropriate?
- Is the writing properly aligned?
- Are the writing standards achieved by the majority of pupils in line with the exemplars provided in the National Curriculum?

Individual Assessment

Children should be observed as they write during handwriting lessons - the teacher must circulate, monitor and intervene. Teachers also need to monitor and mark whole pieces of writing. The following should be considered:

- Is the posture correct?
- Does the child hold the pencil correctly?
- Does the child use the correct movement when forming and or joining letters?
- Are any letters reversed or inverted?
- Does the child write fluently and rhythmically?
- Is the writing early legible?
- Is the pupil's handwriting development in line with the Level Descriptors in the National Curriculum?

Links to Spelling

Linking handwriting with spelling is one of the most powerful ways of developing the visual memory. Handwriting should be practiced using letters, blends, strings or digraphs so that patterns are internalized.

Remember to use **Look - Say - Cover - Write - Check**

The child:

Looks at the work carefully

Says the word

Covers the word so that it can't be seen

Writes the whole word from memory

Checks the word is written correctly

If not, repeat.

Resources

Sheffield Structured Handwriting Scheme.

Monitoring and evaluation

This policy will be evaluated bi annually.

Year 1 National Curriculum

Pupils should be taught to:

- Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
- Begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place
- Form capital letters
- Form digits 0-9
- Understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practice these

Supporting Activities

- **Tracing patterns**
- **Tracing**
- **Copying over (letters, numbers and words)**
- **Copying under (letters, numbers and words)**

Year 2 National Curriculum

Pupils should be taught to:

- Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- Start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
- Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters
- Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters

Supporting Activities

- **Match and copy captions**
- **Trace and copy patterns**
- **Copy words**
- **Copy sentences**
- **Write out menu**
- **Copy poem**
- **Alphabetical ordering**

Year 3 National Curriculum

Pupils should be taught to:

- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting (for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant: that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch)

Supporting Activities

- **Copy words**
- **Copy sentences**
- **Copy poems**
- **Match questions to answers**
- **Copy jokes**
- **Make and copy compound words**

Year 4 National Curriculum

Pupils should be taught to:

- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined

- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting (for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant: that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch)

Supporting Activities

- **Copy words, sentences, poems**
- **Trace and copy**
- **Copy tongue twisters**
- **Copy instructions**
- **Practicing spelling patterns in core skills book**

Year 5 & 6 National Curriculum

Pupils should be taught to:

- Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:
 - Choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters
 - Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task

Improve Upon:

- Ensuring letters are consistent in height and size
- Practicing with punctuation
- Practicing break letters
- Ensuring the ascender on the letter t is the correct height
- Practicing spacing within words
- Developing fluency
- Practicing printing
- Practicing presentation
- Practicing speed writing
- Revision
- Looking at different handwriting styles
- Practicing spelling patterns

APPENDIX 1

Here's a warm up that's great for posture and a positive attitude. Use it before cursive handwriting lessons and during the refreshing and can be done even in a crowded class. If it's manageable, let your students jump in place first.



Push palms



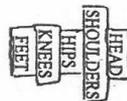
Pull hands



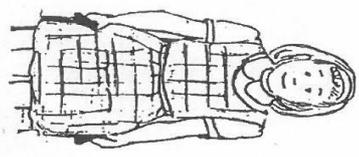
Hug yourself tightly



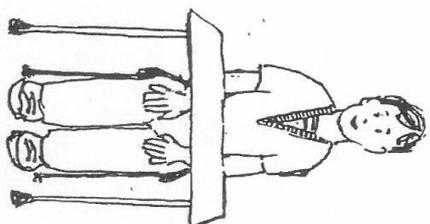
Reach high, one hand, then other
Reach - make circles in the air



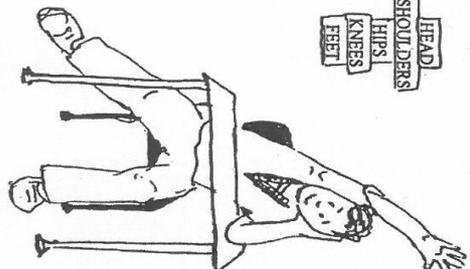
* BLOCKS



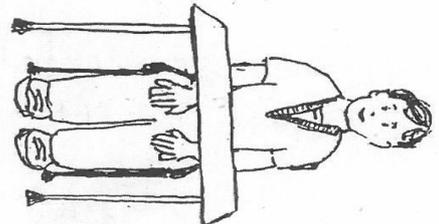
Pull up on chair



* Stack your blocks



Assume an outrageous posture



Stack your blocks again!

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