



Capel Primary School



Handwriting Policy

Reviewed: Autumn 2014

Next Review Date: Autumn 2015

Handwriting Policy

Aims

- To encourage in children the desire to write clearly, legibly and fluently in a cursive style.
- To equip pupils with the skills and knowledge to produce cursive handwriting with confidence.
- To promote continuity and progression throughout the school.
- To encourage pupils to take pride in the presentation of their work.

Objectives

To ensure the development of handwriting so that children can

- Form capital letters correctly.
- Form digits 0-9 correctly.
- Form lower case letters in the correct starting and finishing positions.
- Use horizontal and diagonal strokes to join letters.
- Increase legibility with parallel and equidistant down strokes.

Whole School Approach

When children enter school, we will focus on their motor skills and correct pencil grip. We will encourage them to make marks with confidence and develop their letter formation. As children grow in confidence and accuracy, they will be taught the appropriate starting points for a cursive script, so that by the end of key stage one, they are familiar with a range of joins and are more able to write in a fluent style. Children will be taught the cursive script as appropriate, once they are familiar with basic letter shapes.

Teaching Strategies

Each class will teach discreet handwriting skills for a minimum of 20 minutes per week. In Years 2 and upwards, this will be combined with phoneme patterns and weekly spellings. Children will use regular lined paper for this, but where children struggle with ascenders and descenders, specific handwriting paper will be used.

Basic structure of handwriting sessions in KS1 and KS2 (and later stages of EYFS)

- Relaxation
- Posture check (feet flat on the floor, back touching the chair, book slightly tilted)
- Teacher modelling
- Children practising independently with teacher model, then from memory

Sessions are fun, varied and multi-sensory, e.g. sky writing, writing on backs with fingers.

Handwriting books are used appropriately and complimented by whiteboards and pens, when learning new formations.

In EYFS, Key Stage One and Key Stage Two, children learn letter formation using “shape” families:

Long ladder letters: l i j t u y

One-armed robot letters: r b h k m n p

Curly Caterpillar letters: c a d e g o q f s

Zigzag letters: z v w x

Agreed key indicators of good practice in handwriting

- Short, regular practice in order to establish, develop and maintain good writing habits
- Good examples of handwriting, pupil and adult, on display around the classroom
- Correct vocabulary used in KS1 and KS2 (ascenders, descenders, loops, formation, spacing, size, join)
- Correct formation of all letters, adherence to the agreed school policy for handwriting
- Correct sitting position – all pupils comfortable and facing the teacher when modelling good practice
- Correct pencil/pen grip to be encouraged – held between thumb and first finger, resting against middle finger. Pencil grips can be used to support pupils with difficulties
- Paper position comfortable for pupil – adjusted for left or right-hander, spare hand used to steady paper

- Where appropriate, the teacher is seen by pupils to model the school handwriting style
- Suitable and well-maintained writing implements available to pupils
- Evidence of transfer seen in pupils' other exercise books
- Teachers carefully analyse pupils' work for errors in joins/formation
- Evidence of differentiation – special consideration for left-handers
- Teachers check that pupils who need to wear glasses are doing so
- Learning objectives are made clear to pupils at the start of handwriting sessions and are re-visited at the end

Year Group Expectations

Early Years

Children will develop their fine and gross motor skills through play and participation in Write Dance. They will be able to develop the muscles required for pencil control with activities such as play dough , bead threading and painting. There will be numerous opportunities through the use of whiteboards, role play areas, colouring and sand play.

Children will be taught handwriting through phonics with daily input. They will be forming clear letters and will only be taught cursive lead ins when they are forming the basic shapes to a consistent size and are able to place their letters on the line.

Year 1

Children will 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. They will 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 practise these.

Year 2

Children will form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another and 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. They will write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters. They will use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

Year 3 and Year 4

Children will use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined. They will increase the legibility and quality of their handwriting, e.g. by ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch. In Year 3, children will start to use pens for special writing post editing. In Year 4, there will be an expectation that pens are used in Literacy, but it is to be emphasised that diagrams, keys etc. will still be drawn in pencil. Pencil will be used for numeracy.

Year 5 and Year 6

Children will write legibly, fluently, with increasing speed and personal style by

- a) choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding, as part of their personal style, whether or not to join specific letters
- b) choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task (e.g. quick notes, letters)

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 this in differentiated planning. Teachers of children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills should liaise with the AENCo team to develop a programme designed for the individual child. This may involve extra handwriting sessions and access to extra resources. Other areas that could be considered are posture, lighting, angle of table etc. Outside agencies can be contacted where appropriate.

Teachers should be 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.

- Letters which have a cross-stroke such as T, t and f will be formed slightly differently by left handers, where the cross is formed right to left rather than left to right.

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

Assessment and recording

Teachers assess handwriting when assessing writing, using the APP criteria and determine future targets for improvement. Teachers aim to ensure that when marking written work, comments about neatness are kept in proportion in relation to those about content and/or meaning.

Conclusion

This policy will ensure consistent high standards in children's handwriting