

Springmead School

Handwriting Policy

This Policy is a whole school policy including EYFS

Aims and Objectives

1.1 A flexible, fluent and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with confidence and creativity. As such, we actively teach handwriting as part of the English curriculum through daily phonics lessons and discrete weekly lessons, quick reinforcing sessions and application every day. Handwriting is a developmental process with its own distinctive stages of progression from readiness for handwriting, through to letter joins, practicing speed and fluency and higher presentation skills. To develop a clear, 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
- Join letters correctly
- Develop greater control and fluency as they become increasingly confident.

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2. Teaching and Learning style

2.1 Since handwriting is an essential movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed handwriting style by all adults is very important.

2.2 The following are ways to ensure the children are taught in a consistency manner

Pencil grip and tension;

- Writing pressure;
- Clarity of the stroke;
- Orientation of the paper for left/right handed children;
- Body posture: children's feet should be flat on the floor
- Their spare hand should be holding the writing paper/book still.

2.3 Children need to be made aware of:

- Where the letter starts;
- Where the individual letter stands with regard to the baseline;
- Ascenders and descenders - lined paper will assist;
- Spacing and finger space between words;
- Consistent writing size;
- Capital letters and their appropriate use

2.4 Left Handed pupils

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.

Planning

3.1 Regular handwriting lessons. The children work on 'air writing', small whiteboards, lined paper, lined handwriting books, photo-copy sheets, apps on the class set of ipads, such as hip hop hen and on the interactive whiteboard.

3.2 There is a selection of poems for the use of handwriting available in the staff room. They are in order of ability. The font to be used across the school specifically for handwriting (Joint) is also available on the computer system for teachers to provide their own handwriting sheets for the children too.

4 The Foundation Stage

4.1 In the Foundation stage, the early learning goals for Communication and Language and Literacy underpin all handwriting work. Reception children work according to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework. Their curriculum encourages the children to develop essential pre-writing skills which form the foundations of the handwriting lessons in Key Stages 1 and 2. This achieved by ensuring that when the children learn to form the letters, they use a multisensory approach.

Making patterns and letter shapes in the air, on each other's' backs, in shaving foam/ wet sand/ paint etc.

Linking letter sounds with their shape e.g. s = slippery snake, and encouraging children to write individual letters/ words when they are ready via their Letters and Sounds work.

Encouraging the children to use the correct 'tripod' pencil grip, as we feel it is vitally important for young children to be taught how to hold their pencil and form their letters correctly. It is extremely difficult to correct an older child's incorrect pencil grip or incorrect letter formation once bad habits are established.

Begin with teaching the lower case formation initially, with the exception of the initial letter of the child's name. The capital letters are introduced later.

4.2 At Springmead we use a pre-cursive style of handwriting in the foundation stage. This prepares children for joining as they move through to Year 2, where they then begin to join up their writing once they have established the correct orientation of the letters.

5. Contribution of handwriting to teaching in other subject areas

5.1 Good, clear, legible handwriting is essential for all subjects across the curriculum. Time devoted to the teaching and learning of letter formation in the early years will pay off. Legible writing that can be produced comfortably, at speed and with little conscious effort allows a child to attend to the higher-level aspects of writing composition and content. This is important when assessments are based on written work, particularly in time-limited written examinations, which remain as a major form of assessment for many formal qualifications. Without fast and legible handwriting, students may miss out on learning opportunities and under-achieve academically.

6 Teaching handwriting to children with special needs and disabilities

6.1 Children with Special Educational needs, where necessary, will be provided with specialist equipment such as pencil grips, slanted writing board or wider ruled lined paper. Children will also have the opportunity to use iPads to rehearse specific skills on a more regular basis. Intervention may be required for children who experience significant difficulties with their writing skills and fine motor coordination.

7 Assessment

7.1 Handwriting is currently assessed and recorded on Assessing Pupil's Progress tracker. The handwriting coordinator also leads a work scrutiny staff meeting, looking at handwriting across the whole school to track progression and raise standards.

8 Resources

8.1 To aid pupils' handwriting we have purchased a site license for 'Joinit'.

- This is loaded on to all the teachers' computers in the school.
- Teachers should use the Teach Handwriting www.teachhandwriting.co.uk/ website which can be used to model the formation of the letters and to print worksheets. The handwriting power point on Twinkl can also be used to demonstrate cursive handwriting.
- Hip Hop Hen is on all the ipads, ideal for pre cursive letter practice in the EYFS and Year 1.

9 Monitoring and Review

9.1 Children in the EYFS are assessed on an ongoing basis through observation. Within Key Stage One and Key Stage Two, handwriting is assessed as part of children's writing assessments each half term.

9.2 Handwriting pens are given when the Year 4 teacher believes the child is ready. In Year 6, children are encouraged to bring in their own pens from home.

9.3 Every year a child in Year 2 is selected to win the handwriting cup, which is presented at the leaver's assembly. This is to promote the importance of good handwriting and therefore a positive recognition for the child, working hard on their presentation.

This policy is the principal's ongoing responsibility and reviewing its effectiveness annually in consultation with the staff.

Signed:

Date: