



Handwriting Policy

September 2023



Teagues Bridge Primary School

Handwriting Policy

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Signed by Chair	

Aims

For teachers and teaching assistants

1. To know the correct style, letter formation and joins in handwriting to ensure consistency across the school
2. To understand the progression in handwriting so that pupils are taught in every lesson and pupils' handwriting develops and improves.
3. To ensure high expectations in handwriting lessons and that pupils are expected to apply the same standards in other independent writing.

For pupils

1. To know the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively.
2. To write legibly in joined handwriting and printing styles with increasing style and speed by:
 - Having a correct pencil grip
 - Knowing that all letters start from the top, apart from d and e, which start in the middle
 - Forming all letters correctly
 - Knowing the size and orientation of letters

Teaching Time

There should be daily handwriting lessons in EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Children who find handwriting difficult should be targeted through additional daily intervention.

Model used

At Teagues Bridge Primary School, we follow the Nelson handwriting model with the following letter formations.

Lower Case

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Upper Case

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Numbers

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

The Four Joins

1. To letters without ascenders
2. To letters with ascenders
3. Horizontal joins
4. Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders

The break letters that are not joined are: b g j p x y z s

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

At Teagues Bridge, we will progress to a fully joined font when the children are ready.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

However, children must be taught individual letters first so that they see them as individual units before learning to join.

Resources

Year Group	Pupil Books	Resources and Assessment Books	Workbooks	Classroom Aids
Reception (EYFS)				
Year One				

Year Two



Year Three



Year Four



Year Five



Year Six



Paper

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

Reception

All children should write in A4 plain books. When ready to move on to lines, the children should have pencil lines drawn on for them before the children write. These lines should be well spaced (about 2cms apart).

Year 1

All children should write in 2cm wide lined exercise books.

Year 2

Most children should be ready to start the year in narrow lined books. For some children, they will need to continue in wide lined books until ready. Handwriting practice should be completed in English books daily.

All children should be allowed to use unlined paper from time to time, so that they can practise applying skills; considering issues of presentation and aesthetics.

Years 3 to 6

Children should use narrow lined writing books. Handwriting practice should be completed in English books daily at the start of an English lesson.

Teaching Sequence

1. Hand and finger strength (warm-up exercises)
2. Physical preparation
3. Tracing
4. Patterns
5. Over teacher's handwriting (highlighter)
6. Under teacher's handwriting (highlighter)
7. Independence

For hand and finger strength warm-up exercises, please see Appendix 1.

Techniques for teaching letter formation

- Model good handwriting all the time
- Demonstrate
- Talk through the process
- Encourage children to verbalise the process
- Children form letters in the air
- Fingers trace over tactile letters

- Write over highlighter pen (or dotted letters)
- Draw round templates
- Write in sand with finger or sticks
- Write with chalk on chalkboard
- Wax resist letters
- Form letters with beads in plasticine
- Form letters with pegs on pegboards
- Finger trace the outline of letters on the back of the person in front of you

Getting ready to write

Seat 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 to the left of the peer

Pencil Grip

Children should write with a HB pencil (or pen which is rewarded alongside a pen licence) with a rounded tip. Pencils should be reasonably sharp.

For right handers

- Hold lightly between the thumb and forefinger about 3cm away from the point.
- The paper should be placed to the right with a slight tilt 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 degrees
- 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 children as their elbows will collide.

Assessment

Phase leaders in team meetings and senior leaders should monitor children's writing and presentation in books regularly (at least 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 most pupils in line with the National Curriculum?
- Does the handwriting from handwriting practice match presentation and handwriting in other books?

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 there any letters reversed or inverted?
- Does the child write fluently and rhythmically?
- Is the writing easily legible?
- Is the pupil's handwriting in line with expectations 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 practised using letters, blends, strings or digraphs so that the patterns are internalised.

Specific Handwriting Difficulties

Faulty Pencil Grip

An overtight pencil is the most common fault. Crooking of the forefinger and pressing too hard are common indications of this. Encourage the pupil to relax and to hold the pencil lightly between their thumb and their middle finger, while their forefinger rests lightly on the pencil.

Incorrect letter formation

Children are often able to write letters which are correctly shaped but have been produced by incorrect movements. If bad habits of this kind are allowed to become ingrained, the child will be seriously hampered when he or she progresses to joined handwriting. It is important, in the early stages of development, to ensure that:

- All letters are started in the correct place
- In general, movements start at the top and go down
- Ovals are made with an anticlockwise movement

Reversals, inversions and mirror writing

Common problems include:

- Reversals: b for d, and p for q
- Inversions: w for m
- Mirror writing: was for saw

Causes include:

- Confusion between left and right
- A lack of commitment to one hand
- A natural tendency for left-handers to pull the hand across the body from right to left
- A general lack of maturity or confidence

Children with these problems can be helped by increased emphasis on the writing direction and the consistent use of one hand for writing.

Resources

Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book

Nelson Handwriting Resource Book

Online resources through Oxford Owl



Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be evaluated annually or before if things need to be amended termly.

Appendix One

Order of teaching

Single letters (YR and Yr 1)

- c a d g q o
- e s f
- i l t
- u y j k
- r n m
- h b p
- v w x z

Supporting activities

- tracing patterns
- tracing
- tracing over (letters, numbers and words)
- copying under (letters, numbers and words)

Joins (Yr 2 going into Yr 3)

Introduction of the four handwriting joins

- First join – un, um, ig, id, ef, eg, or, ing, ung
- Second join – ch, sh, th, tl, ll, ill, sli, slu, ck, ack, st, sti, ink, unk
- Third join – od, pg, re, ve, oon, oom
- Fourth join – wl, vl, of, ff, fl, flo
- Practise capital letters
- Practise with break letters and move on to joining when ready

Supporting activities

- Match and copy patterns
- Trace and copy patterns
- Copy words
- Copy sentences
- Copy poem
- Alphabetical ordering

Joins (Yr 3 going into Yr 4)

Revision

- Practise capital letters

Further practise of the four handwriting joins

- in, ine
- ut, ute
- ve, vi
- ok, oh
- sh, as, es (practising two ways of joining the letter s)
- ri, ru, ry (practising joining from the letter r)
- oa, ad, as (practising joining to and from the letter a)
- ee, ed, ea (practising joining from the letter e)
- ow, ov, ox (practising from the letter o)
- er, ir, ur (practising joining to the letter r)
- ai, al, ay
- o, you, oi
- re, oe, fe (practising the horizontal join to the letter e)
- fu, wu, vu (practising the horizontal join to the letter u)
- ot, ol, ok (practising joining to ascenders)
- ai, al, ow, ol (practising all the joins)

Supporting activities

- copy words
- copy sentences
- copy poems
- match questions to answers
- copy jokes
- make and copy compound words

See Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book, page 54, for learning outcomes and further information

Year 4

- ning, ping, ting
- oc, od, oo
- ake, ome, are
- fla, flo, fle
- who, wha, whe
- ie, in, il
- inly, ky, ny
- ap, ar, an
- ick, uck, ack
- practise writing with a slope

- he
- we
- re
- fte, fir, fin
- wra, wri, kni (silent letters)
- ii, ll, tt, rr, nn, mm, cc, oo, dd, ss, ff, ee
- ew, ev, ex (spacing)
- th, ht, fl (proportions)
- ac, ag, af
- Capital letters
- Decorated capital letters
- Practising with punctuation ? ! – “ ” ‘ ` , .

Supporting activities

- Copy words, sentences and poems
- Trace and copy
- Copy tongue twisters
- Copy instructions

Years 5 and 6

- Practise consistency and size of letters
- Practise using a diagonal joining line
- Practise leaving an equal space between letters
- Practise joining to the letter y
- Practise using a horizontal joining line
- Practise the size and height of letters
- Practise joining from the letter i
- Practise joining to and from the letter v
- Practise consistency in joining and forming letters
- Practise speedwriting
- Practise double crossing tt on completing the word
- Practise joining to and from the letter e
- Practise joining to and from the letter w
- Practise printing
- Practise drafting and editing
- Practise joining to the letter t

See Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book page 102, for learning outcomes, activities and further information

- Ensuring letters are consistent in height and size
- Practising with punctuation
- Practising joining from the letter m

- Ensuring the ascender on the letter t is the correct height
- Practise spacing between words
- Developing fluency
- Practising printing
- Practising forming and joining the letter f
- Practising presentation
- Practising speed writing
- Revision
- Looking at different handwriting styles

See Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book page 126, for learning outcomes, activities and further information

- *Revision for all skills*