

# Handwriting Policy

# Handwriting

Handwriting is a complex skill involving a range of cognitive, linguistic, perceptual and motor abilities (a movement stored in the body, rather than a conscious memory). As a child progresses through school the requirement to write legibly and fluently, at speed, increases considerably and the cost of being unable to do so also increases.

There is a need for automaticity, and how the component skills, such as joining up letters and spelling, need to be in place by 11 years old. Creativity will suffer if the child has to focus on the mechanics of writing. As a group, reluctant writers lacking practice will trail behind their peers whose skills improve rapidly just because they can write more. The skill of handwriting needs to be taught. It is not a natural skill that will grow and develop like speaking and walking.

## Aims and Purpose

- To know the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively.
- To write legibly in a joined style with increasing fluency and speed by:
  - Having correct pencil grip
  - Knowing that all letters start from the top, except d and e which start in the middle
  - Forming all letters correctly
  - Knowing the size and orientation of letters
- To ensure flow and movement are fluent and smooth.
- To raise children's self motivation and esteem through the establishment of best handwriting practice.
- To establish and maintain a high profile of handwriting and presentation skills by displaying and rewarding work that meets the standard.

## Implementation

At Bedmond Academy.

- We have high expectations and we believe that all children should be exposed to letter formation even if they cannot write.
- All children will be taught daily letter formation and handwriting from nursery to year 6.
- In Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 letter formation teaching will be strongly linked to Phonics and physical development.
- Children who find handwriting difficult should be targeted for daily intervention with an adult e.g. SENCO/TA/Teacher.
- Teachers use the 'Dotted' stickers as praise for effort in work (see Behaviour Policy)
- Children are expected to peer mark and evaluate their own and others work, where possible (KS2 children to peer assess in green biro; KS1 children to assess in green pencil);
- Handwriting will take place in a child's English book.

## Marking

- Teachers will use a 'whole school' stamp if the child has completed their handwriting correctly.
- If a child has made a mistake then the work should be ticked to show it has been acknowledged by the teacher, and verbal feedback and the correct formation should be given.
- Teachers should give children the opportunity to improve their work based on their marking and verbal feedback.

## Tools

## Pencil and Pens

- Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 should use a good quality handwriting pencil.
- Key Stage 2 should use blue Berol pens.
- A variety of good quality pens should be available for personal use and in the graphic areas.
- SENCO can advise on pens for children with specific needs.

## Grip

- The tripod grip is recommended
- Individual grips should be given to those who require it.
- In Key Stage 2 'triangular pens' should be used by those children who find holding a pen difficult.

## Paper and books

- All children will be exposed to a range of writing materials in whole class teaching or through graphic areas
- Foundation Stage should use plain paged books; however children can choose or be encouraged to use broad lined books.
- Key Stage 1 should start as above but move on to practising in their English books.
- Key Stage 2 children should practise in their English books.
- Where necessary, some children may use handwriting books as an aid in a small group.

### Right Handers

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

### Left Handers

- Hold lightly between the 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 child as their elbows will collide!*

*All children should have their chair tucked in to give a good sitting position when writing.*

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

## Order of letters

### 1) EYFS

- l, i, t,
- j, u, y
- b, h, k,
- m, n,
- p, r
- c, a, d,
- e, g, o,
- q, f, s
- v, w,
- x, z
- Start to form digits 0 -9
- Start to form capital letters
- Hold a pencil correctly
- Sit correctly at a table
- Children should be taught the join as soon as they learn a blend

#### Supporting activities

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

### 2) Yr 1

- Hold a pencil correctly and comfortably
- Practise all lower case letters from the year before, starting and finishing in the right place e.g. middle of top, with a flick on the end
- Know the letter families (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways)
- Make distinctions between ascenders and descenders and other 'between the lines' letters
- Clearly distinguish between similar looking letters, e.g. h/n, a/g etc
- Form all capital letters
- Form digits 0 -9
- Finger spaces
- Start on the baseline joins below.
- in, un, um, am, ine, ime, an, ar, aw, ir, hu, ti, ki, du,
- ey, ay, ip, up, it, nt, ent, ant, ill, all, ib, if, ub, th, ck, ch

#### Supporting activities

- Match and copy
- Trace and copy
- Copy words
- Copy sentences
- Copy poems
- Alphabetical ordering

### 3) Yr 2

- Hold a pencil correctly
- Practise all lower case letters from year 1 and know the letter families
- Practise all capital letters
- Practise digits 0 -9
- Revise the baseline joins

- Start on the horizontal and diagonal strokes, examples below
- Should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.
- op, ou, ow, ov, ri, ru, ve, we, re, fe, fu, fi, ob, ol, wh, rk, rt, ot, of, fl, ft

#### Supporting activities

- Copy words
- Copy sentences
- Copy poems
- Alphabetical ordering

#### 4) Yr 3

- Practise capital letters
- Practise the digits 0 - 9
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting,
- Practise the baseline, diagonal and horizontal joins
- in, ine
- ut, ute
- ve, vi
- ok, oh
- sh, as, es
- ri, ru, ry
- oa, ad, as
- ee, ea, ed
- ow, ov, ox
- ky, hy, ly
- ha, ta, fa
- od, oo, og
- er, ir, ur
- ai, al, ay
- o, you, oi
- re, oe, fe
- fu, wu, vu
- ot, ol, ok
- ai, al, ow, ol

#### Supporting activities

- Copy words
- Copy sentences
- Copy poems
- Copy jokes
- Make and copy compound words

#### 5) Yr 4

- Practise capital letters
- Practising with punctuation
- Practise the digits 0 - 9
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting,
- Practise the baseline, diagonal and horizontal joins
- ning, ping, ting
- oc, od, oo
- ake, ome, are
- fla, flo, fle
- who, wha, whe

- ie, in, il, ing
- inly, ky, ny
- ap, ar, an
- ick, uck, ack
- he, we, re
- fte, fir, fin, ful
- wra, wri, kni
- ii, ll, tt, rr, nn, mm, cc
- oo, dd, ss, ff, ee
- ew, ev, ex
- ed, er, est, en
- th, ht, fl
- ac, ag, af
- ment, ness,

### Supporting activities

- Copy words
- Copy sentences
- Copy poems
- Copy jokes/ tongue twisters

### 5) Yr 5 and 6

- Practise consistency and size of letters
- Practise all four joins (diagonal, horizontal, etc)
- Practise size and height of letters
- Practise leaving an equal space between letters
- Practise consistency in forming and joining letters
- Practise speed writing
- Practise crossing double tt on completion of word
- Practise drafting and editing
- Be taught to use an unjoined style (e.g. for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra)
- Experiment with different writing styles e.g. block capitals for filing in forms or writing email addresses

### Handwriting tips for teachers

- Insist on a correct, balanced seating position.
- Two hands to be used at all times.
- 6 feet on the floor, the chair and child's!
- Ensure pencils are always sharp!
- Ensure book/paper is correctly positioned.
- To preserve meaning, children should not practise on a whiteboard.
- Teacher to class demonstrations should be followed by practises lasting no more than two minutes.
- While children are writing, constantly reinforce teaching points and good practice.
- Be constantly on the move while the children are writing, praising and assessing where individual help is needed.
- Teach children that ascenders letters go half way up and decenders go half way down.
- Photocopy/scan/ use the visualiser to examine work or use as a good example.

### Techniques for teaching letter formation

- Model good handwriting all the time

- Demonstrate
- Talk through the process, explaining how you are forming a letter/s
- Encourage the children to verbalise how they are forming a letter/s
- Model forming the letters in the air
- Ask the children to form the letters in the air
- Finger trace letters
- Write over a highlighter pen or dotted lines
- Draw around templates
- Write in sand/water etc with finger or stick
- Write with chalk on a chalkboard/ground
- Form letters with pegs on pegboard
- Form letters with beads in plasticine
- Finger trace the outline of letters on the back of a person / on the carpet

### **Handwriting warm up activities**

- Push palms together
- Pull hands apart
- Hug yourself tightly
- Reach high with one hand, then the other
- Make circles in the air
- Assume an outrageous position
- Touch your head, shoulders, knees and toes

### **Whole school assessment and class assessment**

1. Is the writing generally legible?
2. Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
3. Are the joins made correctly?
4. Are the spaces between letters, words and lines appropriate?
5. Is the writing properly aligned?

### **Individual Assessment (For those with particular problems)**

1. Does the child adopt the correct posture?
2. Does the child hold the pen/pencil correctly?
3. Does the child use the correct movement when forming and joining letters?
4. Does the child reverse/invert any letters?
5. Does the child write fluently and rhythmically?
6. Is the writing easily legible?
7. Is the writing appropriate?
8. Is the writing in line with the level descriptors?