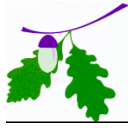


Oak Hill First School Handwriting Policy



Handwriting is a taught skill and it is important that teachers are seen to put a high value on teaching and sustaining good handwriting.

Aims

- To have a consistent cursive approach across the whole school to ensure high levels of presentation.
- To adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays / resources.
- Children to achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting.
- Children to develop fluency and speed whilst writing, so that eventually they are able to write the letters with confidence and correct orientation.
- To help pupils enjoy learning and developing their handwriting with a sense of achievement and pride.

Teaching and Organisation

It is important for teachers to set a good example to children by always modelling good letter formation when writing on the board or when marking children's books.

Handwriting and expected standards of presentation should be taught regularly as a class activity. Handwriting may also be included as a group activity in guided reading sessions. A model of the agreed handwriting style should be displayed in all classrooms. In addition, posters around the school environment should also model expectations for handwriting and presentation.

During the lesson, children should be positioned where there is adequate light for them to see their writing clearly and where they have a clear, uninterrupted view of the board. They should not have to twist in their seats to watch the teacher model handwriting.

Attention to posture and seating arrangements is important. Teachers should ensure the following are in place:

- Chair and table should be at a comfortable height.
- Table should support the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor.
- Children should be encouraged to sit up straight and not slouch.
- Four feet of the chair should be on the ground.

- Tables should be free of clutter.
- Left handed pupils should sit on the left of their partner.

Children who may display specific difficulties with handwriting will have these addressed through such interventions as slanted writing boards, rubber pencil grips, using alternative writing media etc. Individual cases may be referred to the Inclusion Manager where necessary.

Handwriting is a high priority in school and therefore there will be regular sessions each week across the school.

KS1 4/5 x 10/15 minute session weekly

KS2 2/3 x 10/15 minute sessions weekly

The lesson structure should be -

- 3 minutes: Brief warm up exercises led by teacher.
- 4 minutes: Teacher models formation of letters in isolation, joins or words.
- 8 minutes: Teacher (and TA) circulate and intervene in order to secure understanding and progress.

Children in Years R - 2 use 'dough disco' where appropriate, to help strengthen the muscles in their hands and fingers ready for writing.

During handwriting sessions, children will apply taught formations to letters, words or parts of text relevant to their current learning. For example, they may practise the letters from their current phonics/spelling focus, the letter strings used in their weekly spellings, key vocabulary related to core texts or current MoE units or use parts of text from guided reading or literacy texts.

Handwriting books and written work across all subjects will be used as evidence for the progression of handwriting.

Teaching and Learning

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

Order of teaching single letters -

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

As recommended by the British Dyslexia Association, we adopt a continuous cursive style of writing -

Our agreed cursive style is as below:

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ 0123456789

Teachers and Teaching Assistants model the agreed cursive style when modelling writing in class, on displays and in feedback in books.

Things to remember for cursive handwriting:

- All letters start on the line
- The majority of letters finish on the line with a flick ready to join the next letter
- Entrance and exit strokes will be referred to as 'kicks and flicks' in the early years and in other year groups as appropriate.
- t and x are crossed and i and j are dotted last (when the letter or word has been written).

Handwriting Materials

A range of writing materials should be available in the early years.

Pencils should be used for all work in Key Stage 1 and for most of the work up to the end of year 3 in Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 4 will have the opportunity to earn a pen license and be able to write using a handwriting pen, at the discretion of the class teacher.

Pencils should continue to be used throughout the school for notes, drafting, all maths work, diagrams, charts and maps.

Children should be encouraged to always write with a sharp pencil. Pencil grips should be used selectively for children who are experiencing difficulty with hand control.

Pupils in Years 2 - 4 will use 4 lined handwriting paper during handwriting lessons while it is appropriate for them. When pupils are demonstrating that their letter formation is correct, they will practice handwriting using smaller single lined paper. Pupils in Reception and Year 1 will use whiteboards and single lined wide paper during handwriting/letter formation sessions.

National Curriculum Programme of Study:

Handwriting and Presentation:

In order to develop a legible style pupils should be taught to -

Year 1

- 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 'family' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.

Year 2

- 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 letters.

Years 3 & 4

- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to each other, are best left unjoined.
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting.

Scheme of Work

Nursery

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS): Communication, language and literacy. Children should develop fine and gross motor skills by enjoying pre-cursive activities e.g. threading, mark making with paint brushes and water, peg boards, ribbon twirling. They will enjoy mark making in all areas of the environment in order to improve their confidence in readiness to write.

Children will:

- Be aware that marks convey meaning throughout the environment.
- Be able to talk about the marks that they have made and ascribe meaning to them.
- Begin to copy some familiar letters.
- Have an awareness of how to copy write some (or all) of the letters from their name.
- Watch adults do repeated modelling around the environment in order to prepare them for writing and how to form letters correctly.

Reception

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS): Communication, language and literacy. Children should be introduced to cursive script at the earliest stages of writing.

Implements such as chunky triangular pencils, large chalks and chunky pens etc are used by pupils to rehearse skills on paper, chalk boards, pavement etc.

- To practise correct letter formation using *Join It* script.
- Sit in the correct position and hold a pencil correctly to allow fluid movement of the nib, and be encouraged to correct any errors in grip or stature.
- Improve fine and gross motor skills by enjoying drawing pre-cursive patterns in a variety of writing materials such as modelling clay, air writing, sand trays, felt pens, crayons, pencils, IWB, tablets.
- Understand the language needed to describe pencil movements in preparation of letter formation.
- Understand that letters are written on a base line and that all cursive letters 'start on the line' and 'end with a hook'.
- Begin to form some recognisable joined up cursive letters, capital letters and numerals.
- Have an understanding of writing their own name.
- Understanding different shaped letter families.
- To space and regulate letters and words.
- To write from left to right and top to bottom of the page.

Year 1

- To consolidate a conventional tripod pencil grip.
- To continue to practise correct letter formation using *Join It* script.
- To practise handwriting in conjunction with spelling and independent writing, ensuring correct letter orientation, formation and proportion, in a style that makes the letters easy to join later.
- To begin to practise the four basic handwriting joins:
- Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. *ai, ar, un;*
- Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. *ou, vi, wi;*
- Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. *ab, ul, it;*
- Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. *ot, wh, ot.*
- Leave the correct space between words.
- Form capital letters and use where appropriate.
- Form numerals that are consistent in size and sit on the base line

Year 2

- To practise handwriting patterns from Year 1.
- Write legibly using upper and lower case letters with correct joins.
- To continue to practise correct letter formation using *Join It* script.
- To consolidate size, proportion, spacing and legibility.
- Ensure that letters sit on the base line and are consistent in size with ascenders and descenders that are the correct length and formation.
- To practise the four basic handwriting joins:
- Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. *ai, ar, un;*
- Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders, e.g. *ou, vi, wi;*
- Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. *ab, ul, it;-*

- horizontal joins to letters with ascenders, e.g. *ol, wh, ot*.
- To practise handwriting in conjunction with phonic and spelling patterns.
- To use joined handwriting for all writing except where other special forms are required.
- Begin to form printed letters and understand when they are to be used.
- Improve the speed of writing and begin to write automatically so promoting creativity in independent writing.

Year 3

- To use joined handwriting for all writing except where other special forms are required.
- To practise correct formation of basic joins from Year 2.
- To continue to demonstrate, rehearse and verbalise as in KSI.
- To consolidate consistency in size, proportion, fluency and spacing between letters and words.
- To develop clear, neat hand for finished work.
- To build up handwriting speed, fluency and legibility through practice.

Year 4

- To use joined handwriting for all writing except where other special forms are required.
- To know when to use:
- A clear, neat hand for finished presented work.
- Informal writing for everyday informal work, rough drafting etc.
- To build up speed continue to consolidate consistency in size, proportion, fluency and spacing between letters and words.
- To use a range of presentational skills, e.g.
- Print script for captions, sub-headings and labels;
- Capital letters for posters, title pages and headings;
- A range of computer generated fonts and point sizes.

Barriers to Learning and Participation

Some children show clear specific difficulties with fine motor strength, manipulation and control at the earliest stages at school and sometimes enduring. Those children who find early fine and gross motor tasks very difficult and/or show avoidance of fine motor activities need to be monitored closely for possible patterns of visual or physical difficulties that may hinder their learning in writing and possibly other areas. Referral for assessment may be needed to identify causes and interventions established. A multi-sensory approach is helpful for all children and particularly vital for children experiencing barriers to learning and participation. Working with different textures, different sizes of letters, phrases, whole body actions and large

shapes drawn in the air and on boards are some of the methods used to help children internalise letter shapes and joins. Children with significant barriers to learning may find learning a joined hand or even consistent printing too difficult to manage. Some children may need to adapt to writing through ICT and learn keyboard skills as their writing practice.

Monitoring & Assessment

All teachers have high expectations of children in regards to handwriting and presentation of work in books, and will encourage children to take pride in their work. Children's writing and presentation in books will be monitored by class teachers on a daily basis. Children should be observed during handwriting lessons - the teacher must circulate, monitor and intervene. Teachers' marking should highlight errors to the children and the opportunity given for the children to correct mistakes.

Whole school monitoring of handwriting and presentation will be achieved through book scrutiny, lesson observation, environment walks, planning and pupil discussions.

When looking at books, the following should be considered:

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

Resources

The school uses the system Join It to support the teaching of handwriting. This provides models of forming letters, word samples and a way to producing text using the agreed school cursive system. Each class teacher has a log on for the website so they can produce text and worksheets to support teaching and learning.

Policy Written & agreed by staff September 2016.
To be reviewed September 2017