

Hope Primary School Handwriting Policy



We believe it is important that children develop their own handwriting style which is consistently fluent, joined and legible. There should be regular practices for children to learn how to form letters, complete joins correctly and establish a well maintained pace and flow as their proficiency develops. It is important that good habits are established from Reception and formal handwriting sessions will begin in the January of this year.

Children should always be encouraged to sit comfortably on a chair with both feet on the ground adopting an upright posture where they can see each letter as they write. Their writing arm should rest on the desk a comfortable distance away from the body and the other hand used to steady the paper. The pencil should be held between the thumb and the first finger and should rest on the middle finger. It should be held at about 2 to 3 centimetres from the point.

Young children will have plenty of opportunities for practising using pencils, crayons and other writing implements to develop confidence in drawing and producing controlled lines. We will provide 'chubby' pencils where appropriate for young children and special grips for those who need them. The use of biro and gel pens for handwriting will be discouraged. The school will issue handwriting pens when children show they have mastered a joined up fluent style and the child will be presented with a certificate. After being presented with a pen, children may use it for work in all subjects except where it is inappropriate such as drawing or in graph work but not in maths where a pencil should always be used.

Left-handed children can experience greater difficulties than right-handed children with writing. However, with the appropriate guidance, left-handed children can develop handwriting which is just as neat as that of their classmates. Left-handed children should take care not to press too hard when they are writing. They should use a pencil or, when ready, a pen with ink which flows easily as they have to push the pen across the paper rather than pull it as right-handed people do. They should hold the paper at an angle so they can see what they have written. It is beneficial for left-handed children to be seated to the left of a right-handed person so that their arms do not clash when writing.

The school will use materials from the Nelson Handwriting programme. Children who are identified as having difficulty with the fine motor skills associated with handwriting will join a 'busy fingers' intervention group and work through an additional handwriting programme called 'Write from the Start'. Progression through classes is expected as follows:

By the time children leave Puffin class they will:

- Have learnt correct formation of all letters and numbers through the discrete teaching of letter families (caterpillar letters, robot letters, ladder letters and zig zag letters). This will be done in a multi-sensory way but by January of Reception year, children will be having formal handwriting sessions to embed skills early.

By the time children leave Owls class they will:

- Form all upper case letters accurately
- Form £ and ? correctly
- Link handwriting to spelling
- Use all four basic joins
- Write letters of consistent size where most letters sit on the line and descenders pass through it
- Produce tidy and well-formed writing in all independent work

By the time children leave the Hawks class they will:

- Write letters with correct lead in and lead out strokes correctly formed
- Use correct formations for ? ! , ' and speech marks
- Use new form of k, f and x so all lower case letters are joined
- Leave an appropriate gap between words approximately the width of 2 letters
- Produce tidy writing in all independent work, while at the same time developing speed and fluency
- Use correct formations : ; - ()
- Have developed an independent style that is both neat and legible

Policy updated: 22.5.15

To be reviewed:

Signed: _____ Headteacher

Signed: _____ Chair of Governors