

Handwriting Policy

Approved by Governors:

Revised November 2014 - Alison Barrett

Introduction

Our handwriting policy is designed to outline clearly the purpose, nature and management of the teaching of handwriting in the school; thus ensuring a whole school approach to the teaching and learning of handwriting, and consistency in the presentation of work. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all teaching staff. The policy includes the handwriting aspects of the New National Curriculum 2014.

The policy aims to teach children to write in a legible, fluent and fast manner, in order to cope with the writing demands of school and life beyond the education sector of society

There are four main purposes to this policy:

- To establish an entitlement for all pupils;
- To establish expectations for teachers of this subject;
- To promote continuity and coherence across the school;
- To state the school's approaches to this subject in order to promote public, and particularly parents' and carers', understanding of the curriculum.

The Purpose of the Policy

General Statement

Handwriting is a tool for communication in the written form. The purpose of teaching handwriting is to enable children to develop a legible, fast and fluent script, which can be adapted for different audiences. To be successful children need to be taught to sit appropriately and to grip the pen or pencil effectively. Handwriting needs to be taught discretely with children's formation of letters and cursive script observed as part of the teaching and learning process.

Audience and Impact

Children will recognise and value the need for high-quality, attractive presentation and handwriting. They will also develop an understanding of distinct purposes, audiences and settings for handwriting. For example, high quality presentation is needed for display purposes and children should write in a more informal style for personal notes. Children need to identify and understand the purpose and audience for their handwriting.

Fluency and Speed

It is important that children learn to write quickly and automatically in order to cope with the demands of the curriculum. As children progress through the school, the growing emphasis on the skills of the composition rather than the transcription means that fast and fluent handwriting becomes essential. Fluent handwriting is writing where the pen flows from letter to letter across the page in a joined, smooth, steady, continuous manner: an easy rhythmic flow of movement should be developed. However, children should write at a pace that allows them to achieve legibility and regularity.

Self Esteem

All children need to value their work. A child's ability to write comfortably and legible affects performance in many other areas of the curriculum and can have an effect on a child's self esteem and motivation. Moreover, good presentational skills can motivate children to work more generally

with thought and care. Children should therefore be taught to develop the appropriate handwriting style and write with confidence and ease.

Purpose and Objectives of Handwriting Scheme used at Parkside

In order to raise attainment for all pupils, we have adopted a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting to provide continuity across year groups and through the key stages.

Initially, children are taught to form individual letters; joining strokes are then taught to lead in and out of letters. The main feature of the handwriting is that all letters sit on the line. It is in this respect a simple and straightforward style of handwriting which is taught in the school. Children are shown the printed form of the letter and taught to see and use the joining stroke from the line. Children continue to read print around them. The style allows children to more easily develop an automatic style. This releases the brain to concentrate on other ideas in the complex process of writing e.g. spelling, grammar or style.

Teaching and Learning

Handwriting is a skill that needs to be directly taught, practised regularly and observed by teachers to develop and consolidate learning over time. The following should be noted:

- The importance of the teacher's role in competently demonstrating the formation of letters and patterns.
- The expectation that all handwriting sessions will include a **direct teaching** element to demonstrate letter formation and joins.
- The expectation that children are **observed** while they are practising, to avoid the development of bad habits. Immediate feedback can be given and observations will inform assessment, objectives and planning.
- The expectation that children demonstrate the skills they have practised in handwriting sessions in all other areas of their work whenever possible.
- Best practice and assessment of individual needs should guide teachers' judgements about the appropriate balance between whole class and group teaching.

Posture and Grip

The following should be taught, observed and regularly monitored:

- Ensure that children have a **good pencil grip**, which is relaxed but allows for efficient control. The pencil should be held between thumb and forefinger with the pencil resting on the third finger in a tripod grip. The pencil should be held a comfortable distance from the point. Too tight a grip will result in tenseness and unnecessary pressure on the paper.
- Tables should be large enough and chairs of suitable height to allow **comfortable posture**. Children should be positioned with space to write and need direct view of the teacher/board. The paper should be tilted anticlockwise for right handed writers and clockwise for left handed writers. The other hand should be used to steady the paper and bear some body weight.

Children need to be taught to self-monitor and it is important that they are reminded of expectations regularly.

Left-handed Writers

Left-handed writers can face some difficulties and these need to be considered and accommodated to allow them to develop a comfortable fluent style.

- The aim is restricted by having to move across the body. Be aware that the natural right to left writing movement of a left hander can result in mirror writing.
- The hand can move over the top of words obscuring them from vision therefore the grip should be positioned comfortably away from the point.

- The joining strokes are made with a pushed rather than pulled movement so sharp or over fine writing implements need to be avoided.

These strategies will help:

- Make sure left-handed children sit on the left of right-handed children.
- Paper should be tilted clockwise.
- Model (skywriting) specifically for left-handed children.
- Look at a grip specifically for left-handed children.

The learning environment

All classrooms are conducive to writing and have appropriate resources and equipment accessible. A range of writing is displayed in classrooms and corridors. The school has a separate policy about display, (guidelines appended). Many displays are interactive through the use of questions in the written information and resources and source materials are displayed with the pupils' work. Materials such as paper and painting and drawing equipment are accessible to the pupils. The outside environment is used widely as a resource for highlighting good quality writing.

Foundation Stage

In the Nursery and Reception, children will be involved in activities to develop skills which will allow them to eventually acquire legible, fluent and fast handwriting. The activities will develop fine and gross motor control.

Fine motor skills are developed through activities that require small-scale movements such as cutting, sewing, sticking and using drawing or painting tools. Lego, Mobilo and activities such as threading beads, using pegs, tracing and play dough modelling also contribute to the development of fine motor control. These activities prepare children and help them to acquire skills that they will need in handwriting.

From the start of reception, direct teaching of handwriting begins to feature in the weekly routine for the children. Children practise a familiar printed style at this stage, while they are still acquiring or consolidating visual memory of letter shapes.

Inclusion

In most instances the Learning objective will be varied to suit the needs of each child to ensure inclusive provision there are a variety of tools, writing aids and materials to support children with special educational needs. When a child's handwriting development is significantly different from the range in the classroom, then an individual educational plan may be written to address the child's specific fine motor needs. The handwriting targets will be specified, support quantified and set for the duration of the individual plan. The IEP is shared and reviewed with the child and parents.

Resources

Learning resources

All classrooms have a set of art materials and equipment for handwriting. Pupils should learn how to resource and collect materials and equipment for their work in Key Stage 1 and this routine is continued in Key Stage 2. The subject leader is allocated a budget for basic materials for each classroom.

Children are expected to use school resources for handwriting as for other subjects. They should not bring pens pencils rubbers rulers and pencil cases from home. This is to ensure continuity, progression leading to consistent high quality handwriting and presentation.

Implements

In reception, children begin writing with a jumbo hexagonal pencil. For those children who have particular difficulty with pencil grip, a tripod grip is provided. During Year One the children progress to using a thinner pencil, occasionally with a triangular grip and by the end of Year One the majority of children will use a standard pencil. Children are introduced to using a pen once they have demonstrated the ability to write confidently using a joined script.

Paper and Line Guides

Lined books are used in the Reception and through to Year 2. The books progress from wide line spacing through narrower lines to regulate proportion and consistency of size, unless the child's IEP demands an alternative approach. Children are introduced to using a line guide when presenting work for display.

Other Resources

In the early stages of handwriting, large rhythmical movements and the development of fine motor skills are encouraged through the use of modelling materials, paints, sand trays and white boards.

As handwriting develops, use of chalks, paint, inks, special pens and brushes and calligraphy work can refine fine motor skills and presentational understanding. Taking a creative approach to handwriting, occasionally making explicit links with art is a useful way of continuing to develop skills in a different context.

Leadership and Management Roles

The Literacy subject leader is responsible for the planning and the management of the subject and the provision of materials and equipment. The headteacher is responsible for the overall implementation of the policy. A named governor is designated to take specific responsibility for literacy including handwriting, and works, with the subject leader, on evaluation and development.

How the subject is monitored and evaluated

The subject leader is responsible for monitoring and evaluating standards of handwriting and for working with teachers to monitor standards of teaching through classroom observation. This forms part of a rolling programme of school self-evaluation.

The headteacher and named governor monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the policy and curriculum planning. It is expected that significant assessment will take place informally during lessons through discussions and observations. Teaching staff expected to use their assessments to evaluate standards and the effectiveness of the scheme of work. Such assessments are collated at the end of each key stage.

Expectations

By the end of Key Stage 1- the majority of children should be using a fluent joined script.

By the end of Key Stage 2- all children should be writing in a fluent joined script using pen.

The Scheme of Work

The scheme of work outlines the content and management of handwriting at Parkside. The guidance on length and frequency of sessions provides a minimum number of sessions. In addition, there may be groups of children requiring targeted additional practice for a blocked period e.g. ten minutes daily with a teaching assistant. It is expected that all children will follow the scheme. Where a child joins the school late they will usually be integrated into the style of handwriting taught here, since adaptation is generally simple.

Appendix D contains the agreed alphabet, capital letters and letter families with a sequence of introduction.

Continuity and progression

The scheme of work covers the teaching of handwriting. Expectations in each unit are written in three levels. They are progressive and they are matched to the level statements. The work becomes more demanding of the pupils as they develop their skills.

Links:

Literacy policies
Teaching and Learning Policy
Inclusion policy
AG&T policy

Review; This policy will be reviewed as part of the governors rolling programme as set out in the education committees work plan

Appendix A Progression in Handwriting Scheme of work at Parkside

Year Group	Parkside Scheme	NLS Objectives
Foundation	<p>Key Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">To hold and use a pencil in a comfortable and effective way.To form recognisable printed letters through tracing and copying.To form recognisable printed letters from memory. <p>Teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Children will have exposure to print and cursive script in the environment.Activities to promote and develop fine motor skills.Teachers will model correct letter formation daily.Children will have opportunities to practice writing in informal 'free writing' activities and in recording.	<p>Early Learning Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">To use writing implements and hold them effectively.To write recognisable letters through tracing and copying.To write recognisable letters from memory (generally correctly formed).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily opportunities to form appropriate letter shapes. • In the later foundation stage, direct teaching sessions should occur at least two days each week. 	
Year one	<p>Key Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower case letters are usually clearly shaped, correctly orientated and formed in the agreed style. • Capital letters are usually correctly formed and orientated. • Numerals are usually correctly formed and orientated. <p>Teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handwriting session, including direct teaching, at least three times each week. • Sessions of 10-15 minutes. • All children will be introduced to the lower case letters in the agreed style (with joining strokes) in the autumn. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop a comfortable and efficient pencil grip. • To form lower case letters correctly in a style that will be easy to join later. • To practise writing in conjunction with spelling, phonics and independent writing, ensuring correct letter formation, orientation and proportion in a style that makes it easier to join later.
Year Two	<p>Key Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital letter and numerals are correctly formed and orientated. • Upper and lower case letters are accurately produced in one style (not randomly mixed in words); their relative size is accurate. • Children attempt to join all letters (except capital letters) in a continuous cursive style. <p>Teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce and consolidate key skills from year one. • A continuous cursive style, joining all letters is introduced, practised and used in independent writing tasks. • Handwriting session, including direct teaching, at least three times each week. • Sessions of 10-15 minutes (must be timetabled). • Practise writing in conjunction with spelling and phonics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To begin practising and using basic handwriting joins. • To practise handwriting in conjunction with phonic and spelling patterns. • To use the basic letter joins with confidence in independent writing.
Year Three	<p>Key Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing is developing consistency in size and proportion of letters. • Writing is developing consistent spacing between letters and words. • Children use a continuous cursive style in all independent work, with increasing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To practise the correct formation of basic joins from year 2 and use these in independent writing. • To ensure

	<p>fluency and speed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children will be introduced to using a pen. Some children may delay joining if they need to consolidate letter formation. <p>Teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforce and consolidate key skills from year two. Handwriting session, including direct teaching, at least three times each week (timetabled). Sessions of approximately 15 minutes. 	<p>consistency in size and proportion of letters and the spacing between letters and words.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To build up handwriting speed, legibility and fluency through practise.
Year Four	<p>Key Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing is developing consistency in size and proportion of letters. Writing is developing consistent spacing between letters and words. Handwriting style is fluent and joined and legible. Children can adapt to writing to different tasks and audience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure consistency in size and proportion of letters and the spacing between letters and words. To use joined writing for all writing except where special forms are required. To know when to use a clear neat hand or informal writing. To use a range of presentational skills for different purposes e.g. Print, capitals, fonts and points.

Year Group	Parkside Scheme	NLS Objectives
Year Five	<p>Key Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Size and proportion of letters is generally consistent. Spacing between letters and words is generally consistent. Handwriting style is fluent, joined and legible. Children are building the speed of their writing and able to identify audience and purpose of writing. <p>Teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handwriting session, including direct teaching, at least three times each week. Sessions of 10-15 minutes (timetabled). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure consistency in size and proportion of letters and the spacing between letters and words. To use joined writing for all writing except where special forms are required. To know when to use a clear neat hand or informal writing. To use a range of presentational skills for different purposes e.g., print, capitals, fonts and points.
Year Six	<p>Key Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Size and proportion of letters is generally consistent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure consistency in size and proportion

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spacing between letter and words is generally consistent. • Handwriting style is fluent, joined and legible. • Children are building the speed of their writing and able to identify audience and purpose of writing. <p>Teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handwriting session, including direct teaching, at least three times each week. • Sessions of 10-15 minutes (timetabled). 	<p>of letters and the spacing between letters and words.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To use joined writing for all writing except where special forms are required. • To know when to use a clear neat hand or informal writing. • To use a range of presentational skills for different purposes e.g. Print, capitals. Fonts and points.
--	---	---

Appendix B

Letter formation with lead in and lead out joins

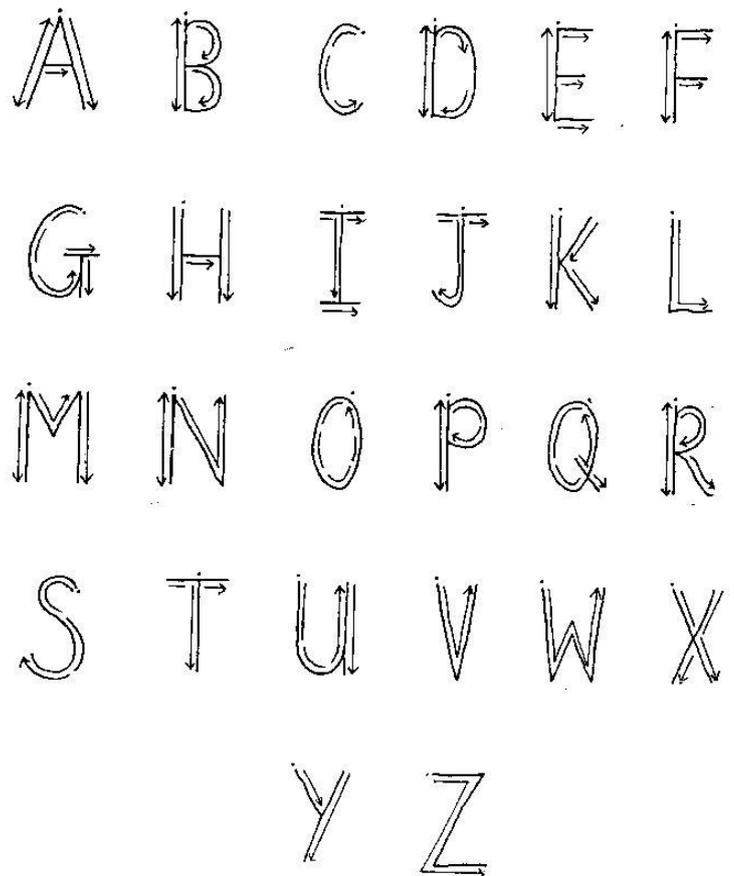
NB: All letters start on the line. Every letter has a lead in and out stroke.

These guides can be found in the children's handwriting books, at the front and back.

NB: All letters start on the line. Every letter has a lead in and out stroke.



The Lower Case Letters
(note that all letters begin from the line)



The Capital Letters
(showing starting point and direction)

26.09.06

Appendix / Reference

- Alphabet with joining strokes and Capital letters
- Letter families / order of introduction

Links

- QTL
- Inclusion
- All literacy policies

Appendix D

Display guidelines

- Use muted matt backing paper and borders so that the viewer's eye is drawn to the child's work (rather than bright display paper). Staple gun to display board.
- Mount all work, using a colour that is prominent from the child's work to compliment the image.
- Where time allows, double mount. Pre cut mounting paper is available for A4 and A3 work in a range of colours.
- Use map pins to display pupil's work so that it can be removed and returned without damage.
- Ensure that children's names are clearly visible. Put a class list into your computer using say point 16 bold type.
- Ensure that display is titled.
- Provide a narrative to explain the work.
- Ensure that your class name is clearly shown.
- Change your displays regularly on a rolling programme, say every 6 weeks. Don't try to change all of your displays simultaneously. Try to make sure that all of the work titles / names are already prepared and ready to go on display before taking your previous display down.
- Pose interactive questions or activities with your display.
- Use drapes where appropriate, especially where 3D work is on show. Ensure that drapes complement and do not overwhelm children's work.

Appendix E

Handwriting Awards – Assessment Levels

This is based on daily evidence from a variety of books folders and papers

Teachers should make their judgement from the bank of statements which “best fit” each child

Year group	AWARD	LEVELS	Standards expected	
R	CERISE (red)	P8	<p>Use a pencil and hold it effectively</p> <p>I sit in the correct writing position.</p> <p>I keep my feet on the floor</p> <p>I hold my paper with my free hand</p> <p>my letters are recognisable</p> <p>I correctly form my letters</p>	
1	ORANGE	1	<p>I can correctly form all lower case letters.</p> <p>All my lower case letters are correctly orientated</p> <p>I can write all my capital letters</p> <p>I can print my numbers correctly orientated</p> <p>Capitals and lower case are not mixed up in my words</p> <p>I use a comfortable and efficient pencil grip .</p> <p>I Write with spaces between words accurately.</p>	<p>Use the space bar and keyboard to type their name and simple texts</p>
2	GREEN	2	<p>I can Write legibly,</p> <p>I use upper and lower case letters appropriately within words</p> <p>I use correct spacing within and between words</p>	<p>Word process short narrative and non-narrative texts</p>

			<p>that are the same distance apart</p> <p>I can form and use the four basic handwriting joins.</p> <p>There is a correct lead-in and lead – out for each letter</p> <p>All letters sit on the line appropriately</p>	
3	PURPLE	3c	<p>I Write with consistency in the size style and proportion of letters</p> <p>My spacing within words is consistent</p> <p>My spacing between words is consistent,</p> <p>I use the correct formation of handwriting joins</p>	<p>Develop accuracy and speed when using keyboard skills to type, edit and re-draft</p>
4	WHITE	3a	<p>I Write consistently neat, legible work</p> <p>I always use joined handwriting</p> <p>I write quickly and fluently</p>	<p>Use word processing packages to present written work and continue to increase speed and accuracy in typing</p>
5	BLACK	4c	<p>I adapt handwriting for specific purposes (for example printing,)</p> <p>I can use italics, appropriately</p> <p>I can use different styles of</p>	<p>Use a range of ICT programs to present texts, making informed</p>

			text for a specific purpose	choices about which electronic tools to use for different purposes
6	SILVER	4a	<p>I use handwriting with a range of media of other media such as book making</p> <p>I use a consistent style</p> <p>I have a personal legible style of writing that I use all the time</p>	<p>Select from a wide range of ICT programs to present text effectively and communicate information and ideas</p>
7	GOLD	5c	<p>I review and amend the neatness of my handwriting</p> <p>I Set personal targets to improve presentation,</p> <p>I use a range of presentational devices, on paper and on screen</p> <p>My work is always attractively presented</p> <p>I mount and display my own work</p>	<p>using a range of presentational devices, on paper and on screen</p>