

Handwriting & Presentation Procedure

April 2022



Rationale

A consistently high standard of presentation, handwriting and letter formation is promoted across the whole school, which all children and staff recognise, understand and follow. For children and teachers, this aims to foster a sense of pride and respect in their work. This pride is identified by Ofsted as a sign of good behaviour. Our school values of respect, responsibility and aspiration are at the heart of this policy. Self-esteem is raised when children are able to communicate meaning accurately and can share their work with pride. Successful teaching of handwriting empowers children to write with fluent, legible and eventually speedy handwriting automatically.

Aims of the policy

- To establish an entitlement for all pupils in our provision of handwriting.
- To establish expectations for teachers and Learning Support Assistants in the teaching and modelling of handwriting/presentation including when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays/resources.
- To promote continuity and coherence across the school.
- To outline the school's approaches to handwriting and presentation to promote parents' and carers' understanding of the curriculum.
- To raise standards in writing across the school.

For children to:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting;
- Develop flow and speed so that eventually they are able to produce the letters and joins automatically in independent writing.
- Be equipped with the skills needed to write clearly in subjects across the curriculum and as they move on through life.
- Develop a love for and the stamina for writing at length.

Guidelines

Our entitlement for all pupils

Handwriting & mark making is taught regularly through short, focused and discrete sessions and may be linked with spelling, grammar, phonic objectives or fine and gross motor skill sessions. Teaching of handwriting should occur outside of writing lessons although every opportunity should be used to model high expectations of handwriting and presentation by all adults at all times.

Handwriting is a skill which needs to be taught explicitly. Since handwriting is essentially a movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed style by the teacher is very important. Consistency in the attitudes displayed, the methods employed and the models provided is the key to effective learning. A mixture of whole class, small group and individual teaching is essential. When needed, children may receive extra handwriting teaching in a small-group intervention.

Expectations of adult teaching and the modelling of handwriting

The role of adults:

- To follow the school policy to help each child develop legible and fluent handwriting and mark making.
- To provide direct teaching, accurate modelling and meaningful verbal feedback to move learning on.
- To provide resources and an environment which promotes effective handwriting.
- To observe pupils, monitor progress and determine targets for development.


The school's approach

The school follows the progression, resources and teaching guidance as set out in the scheme of work produced by Nelson Handwriting, Oxford University Press. Our approach aims for children to write using a semi-cursive handwriting style.

Terminology will be explicitly used and modelled and there will be an expectation that children understand and use this language themselves. This terminology includes the terms: upper case, lower case, clockwise, anticlockwise, vertical, horizontal, diagonal, parallel, ascender, descender, consonant, vowel, joined, slanted and height.

Handwriting or mark making will be taught regularly in all classes from Reception onwards. The expectation is that handwriting is taught 3 x per week.

The language of letter formation should be consistent across the school. Some of the Nelson guidance has adapted to suit our approach.

***Please note that contrary to the guidance outlined in Nelson Handwriting, the formation of the letter f will be taught as  from Reception.**

***The letter s is written in an alternative form from Year 2 when within or at the end of a word to increase the speed of handwriting.**

Progression

In Nursery, the focus is on developing fine motor skills. Nursery children should be provided with opportunities to explore mark making. Adults will observe and assess children as they

give meaning to marks they make as they draw, write and paint. By the end of Nursery, our aim is that all children have established which hand they will use when writing as a natural instinct.

In Reception, children are taught correct letter and number formation in a non-cursive style, moving from single letters to words and sentences. Children are free to select a writing implement of their choice in child-initiated learning. Correct sitting and pencil grip is taught. They are encouraged to write in a straight line from left to right. Use of rulers for labelling is modelled by teachers and rulers are available for child-initiated learning. Children are taught to write 'on the line'.

Resources

Resources from Nelson Handwriting include pupil books (Yr1-6), teachers' books, resources and assessment books, friezes and flashcards and online teaching software. Pencils, pens and rulers should be available for children to use when appropriate. Pencil grips, writing slopes and coloured paper should also be available for children who show specific needs in handwriting.

Lined paper to print is available online. They can also be photocopied from the Resources and Assessment books. These sheets are differentiated:

Starter books: tramlines with an x height of 8mm

Books 1 and 2: tramlines with an x height of 6mm

Books 3 and 4: tramlines with an x height of 4mm

Books 5 and 6: plain ruled lines

It is important to note that these should be differentiated for children by their stage rather than their age.

Inclusion

These expectations apply to the vast majority of children in our school. Occasionally a decision will be made to personalise expectations for a child who has such specific needs that these expectations could be a barrier to their progress (e.g. a child with physical difficulties in writing). Difficulties are addressed through appropriate interventions or specific equipment e.g. a pencil grip, writing slope or yellow paper. Please see our inclusion policy for more information.

Personalised teaching and consideration needs to be in place for the left-handed child. This includes classroom organisation ensuring that a right-handed child does not sit on the left hand side of a left-handed child, as their elbows will collide.

Celebration & Motivation

When it is deemed that handwriting by an individual has progressed to be neat, fluent and legible as well as joined, a child can be awarded with their pen licence. This will be awarded in Year 4 onwards. The child's writing must be shared with the subject champions who will then award the pen licence.

Praise will be given to children for improved presentation and this will be identified through the code outlined in the feedback policy. Children will be rewarded for their presentation and in recognition of meeting our school values of respect, responsibility and aspiration in the presentation of their work.

Assessment

Feedback is key in moving children on in their progression of handwriting. Marking in writing books should be used to give feedback using green and pink pens. Verbal feedback can also be given in line with the school feedback policy. Responding to marking should lead to an impact and visible improvement in future pieces of work in all writing not just in handwriting sessions. When an improvement or decline in handwriting/ presentation is evident, teachers should use the appropriate marking code- P+ or P-. They must verbally discuss this with the child.

Nelson Handwriting provides teachers with four types of assessment sheets to be used as and when appropriate. This includes a handwriting assessment record sheet (a quick and easy reference tool for the teacher to use to record the level of each child's handwriting), placement tests (these can be used at the start of the year to give an overview of a class' handwriting ability), general assessment sheets (these are included for each of the main teaching foci and can be for extra practice or to check how pupils are progressing against the different handwriting challenges) and self-assessment sheets (these take children through elements of their handwriting that they need to check helping the process become automatic).

Teachers will record their assessments of children's handwriting on the school's agreed tracking system, Target Tracker. Target Tracker requires teachers to assess children against a total of 21 statements stretching from Year 1 to Year 6. These assessments will be made on a continuous cycle as set out in the school's assessment policy.

Monitoring

Monitoring of the teaching and learning of handwriting will be carried out by members of the senior leadership team and the authors- writers champions. This will be through drop ins and book scrutinies. This might also involve conferencing with children. All subject champions may look for this to ensure that high standards of presentation are consistent

across all learning. Feedback will be given and actions set. The subsequent impact of these actions will be monitored.

Presentation across the school (Reception onwards)

- All books named with the school label format and logo.
- Every piece of work dated (long date in all subjects except Maths or in red writing journals).
- All work must have a WALT (WALTs can be typed and stuck in when appropriate to the piece of work or stage of development of the child).
- Pencils will be used in Maths.
- Children will move from pencil to pen in writing when it has been determined that individual children are at a satisfactory stage in their presentation and can be awarded their pen licence (generally within Year 4 but this is determined by stage not age).
- When children receive their pen licence, they will use black pens provided by the school.
- Children will use guidelines if they are writing on plain paper (from Y2 onwards).
- All drawings and diagrams will be in pencil.
- Pencil crayons, not felt pens, will be used in exercise books.
- Purple pens will be used for specific reasons by children e.g. self-correcting, editing or peer assessment.
- Adults use codes and coloured pens as outlined in the feedback and marking policy.
- One single line (created with a ruler) will be used to cross out mistakes or edit writing.
- Books must be well kept with no writing or doodling on the outside or inside of covers.
- Books must be stored carefully and treated with respect.
- Children must be shown where to start a new piece of work.
- Poor presentation will be challenged through verbal feedback and marking.
- Symbols will be used to identify a noticeable decline or improvement in handwriting (see feedback and marking policy).
- Work that is stuck in must be trimmed and securely glued onto the page.
- Tippex, correction pens and rubbers are not to be used by children. Tippex and correction pens are not to be used by adults. Children should cross out mistakes using a pencil and a ruler when needed. This must be modelled by adults during the teaching of writing.