

St Andrew's CEVC Primary School, Great Yeldham

Handwriting and Presentation Policy



Reviewed by Geoff Hart
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Aims

Handwriting is a taught skill and it is important that teachers are seen to put a high value on teaching and sustaining good handwriting. Our aim in this policy and scheme is to teach children correct letter formation and good handwriting habits so that they can write fluently and legibly.

A lot can be achieved with a positive attitude towards the presentation of writing. Therefore we aim to encourage children to develop a sense of pride in their written work through an agreed whole school presentation layout of work.

Teaching and Organisation

It is important for teachers to set a good example to children by always modelling good handwriting when writing on the board or when marking children's books, e.g. if printing, use the flicks at the end of letters as in cursive style...

Handwriting should be taught regularly in all year groups. Up to the end of KS1 handwriting should be a regular component of Literacy lessons, but even then, it's better if it's done as a short task that doesn't get confused with composition i.e. handwriting versus writing.

The time allocation for handwriting should be:

KS1 4/5 x 10/15 minute session weekly

KS2 3/4 x 10/15 minute sessions weekly

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.

It is important that in the early years and at key stage 1 children are observed closely during the lesson to ensure that letter formation is correct.

Children can also be encouraged to write neatly in their own community language scripts when the opportunities arise.

Handwriting Materials

- A range of writing materials should be available in the early years. Pencil grips should be used selectively for children who are experiencing difficulty with hand control.
- Pencils should be used for all work in both Key Stage 1 and 2 with pen reserved for displayed handwriting only.
- 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.

Handwriting Books

Single line handwriting books should be used up to and including year 2. Thereafter handwriting practice should be completed in Literacy books which will enable a direct comparison between handwriting practice and composition. This method will provide the opportunity for better accountability.

National Curriculum Programmes of Study: En3

Key Stage 1

In order to develop a legible style, pupils should be taught:

Handwriting

- How to hold a pencil/pen
- To write from left to right and top to bottom of a page
- To start and finish letters correctly
- To form letters of regular size and shape
- To put regular spaces between letters and words
- How to form lower and upper case letters
- How to join letters

Presentation

- The importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate their meaning effectively

Key Stage 2

Pupils should be taught to:

Handwriting and Presentation

- Use different forms of handwriting for different purposes (for example, print for labelling maps or diagrams, a clear, neat hand for finished presented work, a faster script for notes).
- Write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed

Scheme of Work

The scheme of work is based on the **Cripps Handwriting Scheme**. This sets out a programme of work for the whole school.

Most of the following objectives are taken from the National Literacy Framework (from reception onwards).

- Reception**
- to practise correct letter formation using **Cripps** script.
 - to develop a conventional tripod pencil grip.
 - to produce a controlled line which supports letter formation.

- to rehearse letter writing in the air whilst teacher demonstrates and gives verbal instructions.
- to write letters using the correct sequence of movements.
- 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 **Cripps** script.
- to follow the **Cripps** Handwriting Scheme.
- to practise handwriting in conjunction with spelling, ERR 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. *ol, wh, ot*.

Year 2

- to practise handwriting patterns from Year 1.
- to consolidate size, proportion, spacing and legibility.
- 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.

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 KS1.
- 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.

- Year 5**
- to continue to consolidate consistency in size, proportion, fluency and spacing between letters and words.
 - to revise all rules for joining.
 - to develop fluency and speed of own style.
 - 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.
- Year 6**
- to consolidate and develop individual fluent and legible style.
 - to learn to write in differing scripts e.g. *italic*
 - to use scripts appropriately for different purposes.
 - to continue progress in joining by observing different features affecting neatness.

Barriers to Learning and Participation

Some children show clear specific difficulties with fine motor strength, manipulation and control at the earliest stages at school. This may become much less of a problem after following the range of co-ordination and dexterity work in the Reception Programme.

Those children who find early colouring tasks very difficult and show avoidance of fine motor activities need to be monitored closely for possible patterns of visual or physical problems that may hinder their learning in writing and possibly other areas.

Referral for Assessment may be needed to identify causes and remediation.

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 very defined 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.

Encouraging Good Handwriting

The assessment of a child's written work is influenced by the standard of handwriting and presentation. Our school will, therefore, place great emphasis on the teaching of an appropriate handwriting style so children will not be at a disadvantage when their writing is being assessed.

Class teachers should observe the child writing, bearing in mind that the main requirements are for legibility, speed and ease. Below are a number of additional pointers:

1. Position at the desk/table, height of chair and table in relation to body size.

2. Position of paper to body: right handers need this over to right, left handers to left. Slanting the paper helps take account of visual factors to body size.
3. Grip of writing implement: most children should use a conventional tripod grip, but other holds are possible. Check also tightness or floppiness of grip.
4. Letter formation: should follow conventional direction
5. Spacing between words: a letter space is usually sufficient (or a finger space for beginning writers).
6. Slant of letters: notice whether this is roughly in the same direction.
7. Position of letters on line: check that mid-zone letters or parts of letters are sitting on the line.
8. Size of writing : appropriateness.
9. Proportion in letters.
10. Orientation difficulties (e.g. mirror writing).
11. Problems associated with left-handedness.
12. Problems older primary children have with maintaining legibility at speed.
13. Problems with stiffness, pain (in hand, arm or neck) fatigue.

Assessment

By keeping examples of children's written work as part of on-going record keeping, teachers will be able to observe development and to analyse samples with the levels of National Curriculum En3 in mind. However, it is observation of the child while writing which will provide the full picture. Children with poor handwriting need a detailed diagnosis before effective remediation can be planned.

Monitoring

Whole school monitoring of handwriting and presentation will be achieved through book scrutiny, lesson observation, environment walks, planning and pupil discussions. Pupil Progress books, where $\frac{1}{2}$ termly pieces of writing are levelled against individual targets, will provide opportunities for monitoring progression and continuity across the school.

Associated Documents

National Curriculum

National Literacy Framework

Cripps Handwriting Scheme

ELS

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Shared with staff - November 2010

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