

Handwriting Policy

Committee	Curriculum
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'Celebrate learning, Achieving and Friendship in God's Love'

Core Christian Values: Love, Trust, Hope, Respect

'Writing also depends on fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy handwriting.' (English National Curriculum 2014)

Rationale

Handwriting is an important skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the whole curriculum. Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. The cursive handwriting style teaches pupils to join letters and words as a series of flowing movements and patterns. Handwriting skills should be taught regularly and systematically through literacy and handwriting lessons.

Aims

At Waterhouses Primary School our aims in teaching handwriting are that the pupils will have a consistent cursive approach across the whole school thereby ensuring high levels of presentation. In order to do this, children should be taught to:

- develop a recognition and appreciation of pattern and line and be given support in finding a comfortable grip when holding a writing tool;
- form letters properly, identifying where to start and finish each letter;
- form letters of regular shape and size including upper and lower case letters;
- use the correct terminology of ascenders, descenders, lead on and lead off;
- write from left to right and top to bottom of the page;
- put regular spaces between letters and words;
- achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting;
- develop fluency and speed whilst writing, so that eventually children are able to write letters with confidence and correct orientation in all writing;
- take pride in the presentation of their work and therefore study handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement.

Teaching and Learning

As recommended by the British Dyslexia Association, we use a cursive style of writing. All teaching staff use the agreed cursive style when modelling writing both in class, on displays and when giving feedback in books.

Our agreed cursive style can be seen below:

Cursive Lower Case Letters



Letters are taught in groups, according to how they are formed. Handwriting families are:

1. i l t j
2. c o a d g q
3. n m h r
4. u v w y
5. b p k
6. s e f
10. z x

Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

Foundation Stage - Nursery and Reception

Although EYFS is not included in the National Curriculum Programme of Study, handwriting does need to start in the early stages of school and children need to:

- engage in pre-writing or 'writing-readiness' activities;
- practise holding a writing or drawing implement correctly;
- practise and enjoy making marks using a variety of materials;
- make large marks and small marks, using gross and fine motor skills;
- make patterns such as wiggles, curves, straight lines, zig-zags and circles;
- practise drawing patterns inside bigger shapes, keeping within the lines;
- be provided with opportunities to hold a range of writing implements, using the tripod grip, before the muscle memory becomes fixed;
- develop their shoulder movements to encourage upper body strength. When letters are taught, correct letter formation must be insisted upon and corrected where necessary.

'Writing-readiness' suggested activities are:

- Threading, construction apparatus, weaving, tracing, stencils, colouring, painting, scissor skills, experimenting with a range of implements (pens, pencils, crayons, felt tips, chalk, interactive whiteboard, sticks, paints, water)
- Using a selection of materials (shaving foam, mud, wet/dry sand, water) including malleable materials (play dough, clay, mod rock)
- Finger and counting rhymes
- Taking part in activities to develop their fine and gross motor-skills and recognise letters and their patterns, for example: they create gross motor movements using ribbons waving them in the air, they form patterns and letters using their index finger in sand, glitter, shaving foam and paint.

Whole School Strategies

- Children will be introduced to cursive script at the earliest stages of writing to enable an easier transition into Year 1.
- All letter formation will be modelled correctly by an adult.
- All handwriting activities will be supervised to ensure letters are formed, and eventually, joined correctly.
- Children will be asked to sit correctly at the table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.
- Opportunities to develop handwriting will be provided on a daily basis.
- Displays will include models of cursive script.

Key Stage 1 - Years 1 and 2

When teaching handwriting, pupils will continue to be taught to:

- Form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.
- Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another.
- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters (capital letters are not joined)
- Form capital letters.
- Form digits 0-9.
- Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

Handwriting will be linked to all learning involving cross curricular writing. Children will have two twenty - minute handwriting sessions per week. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of children will be able to write legibly, using upper and lower-case letters appropriately and correct spacing between words with the majority of children also joining their writing. Some children will use pencil grips and other specific resources to support their handwriting development.

Lower Key Stage 2:

In Years 3 and 4 most children will be joining their handwriting. It is expected that pupils will write in a joined, cursive style throughout their independent handwriting across all areas of the curriculum. Handwriting should continue to be taught directly and children will have two twenty-minute handwriting sessions per week. The aim of handwriting in Lower Key Stage Two is to increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting and also the fluency with which pupils are able to write down what they want to say. This will also support the development of pupils' composition and spelling.

At the start of Key Stage Two most children will be writing in pencil, however, as children show that they can form and join letters correctly and that they can present their work neatly, children will receive their 'Pen Licence' and therefore will be expected to write in pen. Pens will be used in all subjects except maths and art, where pencils will be used. It will be expected that by the end of year 4, if not sooner, all children will be writing in pen. At Waterhouses, we use black handwriting pens only. Some children in Key Stage 1 may also receive a pen licence if appropriate.

Upper Key Stage 2:

In Years 5 and 6 pupils will continue to be taught to write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by; choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task. Pupils should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version.

Pens

At Waterhouses, we use a range of writing tools: felt pens, whiteboard pens, pencils, ball point pens and gel pens. Younger children are motivated to write using modelling clay, paint, play dough and chalk. Once a child has developed a clear and consistently accurate style and takes pride in producing neat presentation, a pen licence will be awarded.

Provision for left-handed children

At least 10% of the population are left-handed, and our teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision:

- Paper should be positioned to the left for right handed pupils and to the right for left handed pupils and slanted to suit the individual in either case;
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision;
- Pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side;
- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space;
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.

Teachers are aware of the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them.

Capital letters

Capital letters stand alone and are not joined to the next letter. Children must practise starting sentences and writing names using a capital letter and not joining the subsequent letter. This is modelled by the teacher during all writing activities.

Inclusion

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. Children with special educational needs, where necessary, will be provided with specialist equipment such as pencil grips or wider ruled lined paper. Intervention is available for children who experience significant difficulties to practice pre writing skills and fine motor coordination.

Teachers of children, whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills, should liaise with the SENCO to discuss a programme designed for the individual child.

Dyslexia Friendly Statement

As a dyslexia friendly school, our teaching and learning strategies support all children and reflect our positive inclusive culture. It is recognised that the difficulties some children with dyslexic tendencies face may make them vulnerable and result in low confidence and self-esteem. This, in turn, may result in unwanted behaviours. Through our dyslexia friendly teaching and learning strategies we enable all children to make progress and achieve success. This minimises pupil frustrations in learning and feelings of 'failure'. Please see our Dyslexia Friendly Policy for more information.

Children are taught the following so they are aware of the expectations in order to receive a pen licence.

Things I must do to use a handwriting pen:

- My writing needs to be on a line
- I need to put spaces between my words
- My sentences should be punctuated properly with capital letters, full stops and commas
- My writing should be set out neatly
- My writing must be legible

- I use my best handwriting in all my learning



The Role of Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers are made aware of our handwriting style and encouraged to practise this with their children at home.

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.