

Wolverham Primary and Nursery School

Handwriting Policy

At Wolverham Primary School we aim to teach handwriting from entry to our Nursery School. Children will be taught letter formation and we aim to have a progressive programme to support our children to develop a neat, legible and consistently sized style as they move throughout the school.

From Foundation Stage the children will be taught to form letters with exit strokes. From year two, children will be taught entry and exit strokes that will assist with the joining of all letters (except for b, y, g, p, f, x and z). Capital letters do not join (do not have entry nor exit strokes).

Handwriting practice will be carried out on a daily basis throughout the school and will be modelled by teaching staff. Children will use handwriting books to practise and consolidate their skills. Children need to adopt correct posture when writing and it is important that they are positioned correctly. Posture is very important when writing and it is essential that left handers are not seated next to right handers because of 'bumping' of elbows. See appendix 3 for guidance on correct positions and posture.

Appendix 1 outlines all the script for Foundation and Year 1 with exit strokes. All letters start at the top except for e.

Appendix 2 outlines all the script for Year 2 and Key Stage 2 with both entry and exit strokes.

Appendix 3 outlines all capital letter script

Appendix 4 outlines positioning and common handwriting problems

Appendix 5 checklist for teachers and support staff

Useful activities to support teaching

- Use a magic pencil and write the letter in the air*
- Using tracing paper over letters*
- Writing letters on a friends back*
- Writing letters with a magic pencil on the hand*
- Practise writing in the sand and clay*
- Writing on unlined paper can develop awareness of letter relationships*
- Left handed learners often need to slant their paper the other way thus avoiding the need for awkward hand positions.*

Like all physical skills constant reminders of the basic shapes and movements and thoughtful practice are necessary.

Progressive Teaching Objectives for each year group

Reception and Nursery – Foundation Stage

In Foundation Stage initial handwriting skills will be taught by developing fine motor control to enable the children to strengthen the muscles needed to hold a pencil effectively. This is done through:

- *Using resources which develop a pincer movement e.g. using tweezers, threading beads and handling chopsticks*
- *Using large equipment to make marks with e.g. chunky chalks and painting and drawing on the playground*
- *Completing puzzles which require a small and controlled grip*
- *Ensuring that there are a wide variety of resources for the children to access independently, both indoors and outdoors, which encourage the children to experiment with mark-making*

When the children have developed these basic fine motor control skills, they will then be introduced to letter formation, letters will be introduced in the order used in the 'Letters and Sounds' document.

Year 1

- *To form all lower case and upper case letters correctly in a script that has exit strokes in preparation for joining in year two*
- *To ensure correct letter orientation and positioning on the lines*
- *Children will use practice their letter formation using the following letter families:*
c, o, a, d, g, q
l, t, h, b, k, f, I, r, n, p, m,
u, v, w, y

Year 2

- *To begin and practise the four basic joins in handwriting:*
 1. *diagonal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. ai ar un*
 2. *horizontal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. ou vi wi*
 3. *diagonal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. ab ul it*
 4. *horizontal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. ol wh ot*

Year 3

- *To begin and practise the four basic joins in handwriting:*
 1. *diagonal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. ai ar un*
 2. *horizontal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. ou vi wi*
 3. *diagonal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. ab ul it*
 4. *horizontal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. ol wh ot*
- *To build up handwriting speed, legibility and fluency through practise*
- *To ensure consistency in size and proportions of letters and the spacing between the letters and words*

Year 4

- *To use joined handwriting for all writing except where other special forms are required*
- *To present all work neatly*
- *To use a range of presentational skills appropriate to task*
- *To build up speed, e.g. particularly for notes, drafts, lists etc*
- *To ensure consistency in size and proportions of letters and spacing between letters and words*

Year 5 and 6

- *To use joined handwriting for all writing except where other special forms are required*
- *To present all work neatly*
- *To use a range of presentational skills appropriate to task*
- *To build up speed, e.g. particularly for notes, drafts, lists etc*
- *To ensure consistency in size and proportions of letters and spacing between letters and words*

Policy written September 2014

Date for review September 2016

Appendix 1

Outlines all the script for Foundation and Year 1 with exit strokes. All letters start at the top except for e.

Appendix 2

Outlines all the script for Year 2 and Key Stage 2 with both entry and exit strokes.

Appendix 3

Outlines all capital letter script

Appendix 4

Outlines positioning and common handwriting problems

Guidance for Left-handers

Special rules apply for left-handers. They should sit on the left-hand side of double desks or tables. They must be able to rest their left forearms on the edge of the desk. The book or paper must slope in line with the left forearm. As writing is completed down the page, the paper must be moved away from the body in the same line. The aim is to keep the left arm in much the same position at all times to avoid the elbow being cramped by the chest. Moving the paper away from the body prevents writing becoming cramped at the foot of the page. The right hand must be used to control the movement of the page. The left hand should end up below the line of writing to avoid smudging and to give a clear view of what is being written. Children should be discouraged from hooking their left hand above the line of writing to avoid smudging.

Guidance for Right-handers

Right-handers do not face the same problems as left-handers, but many children will find it helpful to slope the paper slightly and to move it away from the body as the page is completed.

Pen Grip

The pen or pencil should be gripped comfortably between forefinger and thumb with the second finger below to steady it. If you pick up a pen which is lying on the table in front of you with its nib towards you in line with your forearm, you instinctively pick it up in the correct grip.

Appendix 5

Checklist for teachers and support staff

If a child's handwriting is to develop into a pleasing and consistent style, it is helpful to examine each piece of writing in the light of the following criteria:

1. *Shape*

Are all letters properly formed and clear?

2. *Joining*

Are as many letters as possible joined consistently?

3. *Slope*

Is the slope of letters consistent? Letters should either be all perpendicular or all sloping (predominantly a forwards slope will be used, however backwards slopes can be developed).

4. *Evenness*

Are letters of a consistent and reasonable size? Capitals can be too big, tall letters too tall, small letters too small.

5. *Floating and Sinking*

Do letters sit on the line? Words sometimes float above or sink below the writing line. This happens because the writing hand is not moving steadily across the page.

6. *Particular Letters*

Which letters are really well formed? Which ones need careful practise?