

The Shade Primary School



Handwriting and Presentation Policy

Policy owned by The Shade Primary School's Local Governing Body	
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Chair Signature:	Jamie Humphrey



Handwriting

Handwriting is a movement skill which affects written communication across the curriculum. We believe that a flexible, fluent and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with confidence and creativity. This needs skilful teaching, if each individual is to achieve our aims.

We aim for our children to:

- form each letter correctly and progress to joining their writing
- write fluently, legibly, accurately and neatly
- write with confidence
- develop flow and speed
- develop an individual style

How do we achieve this?

- Handwriting is taught regularly and consistently throughout the school.
- All staff correctly model a neat and accurate style, including when writing on the whiteboard and in children's books.
- We link handwriting to spellings and phonics whenever possible.
- We use an agreed vocabulary when talking about handwriting with the children and each other, provided by the scheme we use.
- We display good examples of handwriting throughout the school (a variety of typed and hand-written).
- Expectations of standards in handwriting are consistently high throughout the school.

How handwriting is taught throughout the school

Early Years Foundation Stage:

We believe that in order for children to eventually acquire a legible, fluent and fast handwriting style, they need to develop the following skills:

- Good gross and fine motor control, concentration and visual skills are essential before mark making and early writing skills can develop.
- Recognition of pattern.
- Use of consistent language to talk about shapes and movement.
- The main handwriting movements involved in the three basic letter shapes, as exemplified by: l (the long ladder) c (curly caterpillar) and r (the one-armed robot).

We also understand that children learn best and develop their skills through exploring, using all of their senses. It is important that children's experiences of mark making are enjoyable and that their confidence is fostered through what they know, understand and are able to do.



Children should be given lots of opportunities to practise appropriate skills and only encouraged to imitate or copy letters when they are ready to do so. We supervise children when practising handwriting until their letter formation is secure. Children who have experienced the multi-sensory approach at this stage of school, are less likely to develop bad handwriting habits.

Writing Materials and Implements

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children will be encouraged to engage in large scale movements that enable them to develop their posture, stability and body control, through the use of free standing easels (black board and white board) inside and outside. Children will then begin to explore the form of letters using a range of materials e.g. sand, chalk, paint, felt tip, whiteboards etc. All early mark making is celebrated as children are encouraged to write in all areas of learning – through lists in the role play, to plans in the construction area. As children begin to understand the letter system and form recognisable letters, they will begin handwriting practice sessions to encourage the correct letter formation. Children take part in writing sessions where (to begin with) they are provided with plain paper (turned landscape). Children are introduced to writing on a line, when they have the fine motor control to orientate their letter size. Writing on a line helps children to develop control, as the letter's orientation to the line becomes important. Children who are showing less interest in mark making are supported to develop their muscular control in their hand, wrist and fingers.

Handwriting Teaching, Learning and Progress

We use the scheme Penpals for Handwriting which progresses through starting to join in term 2 year 1, through to securing joins in year 3. Penpals helps with long-, medium- and short- term planning for each year group correlated to national guidelines. Penpals focuses on whole class teaching.

End of year data analysis, from the Physical and Writing Early Learning Goals, inform the Year 1 teachers. This knowledge enables them to know where to begin the handwriting sessions and how far to differentiate.

Each year is divided into a number of units. The whole class session for each unit, including the warm up activities, takes no more than 15 minutes. The independent working session takes another 15 minutes. In addition to this allocated time, handwriting is recapped and modelled throughout the school day. Praise for effort with handwriting is given throughout the curriculum, not just the handwriting sessions. As for all motor skills, we believe short and frequent sessions are more productive than long sessions spaced apart. Handwriting practice should be little and often where children can concentrate on developing accuracy, fluency and speed without the distraction of spelling and composing text. Handwriting practice sessions may be supervised by either the class teacher or a teaching assistant. Penpals CD roms are used to aid handwriting practice sessions.



In years 4-6, we continue to use the Penpals for handwriting scheme where joins are revised in year 4 before introducing sloping, size, proportion and spacing. After this, the emphasis during handwriting sessions becomes speed and fluency. Children are challenged to set their own targets for improvement through self and peer assessment.

Writing Materials and Implements:

Handwriting practice takes place in the children's writing books. This will help them apply the specific handwriting skills that have been practised to their everyday writing, in all subject areas. As children's handwriting becomes more controlled, the width between the lines in their books should decrease. Within each class, children's needs may mean that different line widths are being used at any given time. Handwriting exercise books may be provided for any children who are still struggling with correct letter sizing and orientation.

All typed work should be presented using the Penpals handwriting font to model and reinforce the style required.

The use of Pen/Pen licenses.

From year 4 onwards, children will use a handwriting pen during their practise sessions. From Year 5 onwards, those children who have consistently demonstrated joined handwriting will be awarded a pen license by their class teacher enabling them to use a blue handwriting pen when appropriate.

Fountain pens, brought in from home, may be used by those children who have exceptional handwriting.

Guidelines for using pen are as follows:

- Blue ink only in books
- Titles must be underlined in pencil
- All drawings and tables must be in pencil
- All maths must be in pencil

Provision for left-handed children

At least 10% of the population are left handed, the majority of whom are boys. Left handers are recognised in the classroom to ensure that they do not learn bad habits of position, posture and pen hold which will deter a fast, fluent and legible hand.

Things to consider:

- Left handed children should always sit on the left side of right handed children, so their elbows do not bump.
- They should be encouraged to find a comfortable orientation for their paper, usually slightly to the left of the centre of the body.
- To avoid smudging their work, left handed children should be encouraged to position their fingers 1.5cm away from the end of their writing implement.



- Experiment with seat height. Some left handed children may need a higher seat to view their work clearly and to prevent elbow locking into their side as they work across the paper.

Posture and position

We also believe that children need to be taught good posture and position:

- Children should assume a good body posture. Pictures of these are available on the Penpals for Handwriting CD-ROMs;
- Correct grip should be taught (we use commercial pencil grips only if other methods have failed);
- Check that tables are large enough so that the children aren't jostling each other's arms;
- The paper should be tilted slightly;
- Check the heights of tables and chairs so children can sit comfortably;
- Children should use their non writing hand to steady the paper and bear some body-weight;
- Children should have direct view of the teacher/board;
- Lighting should be as good as the room allows.

Marking and Assessment

The most effective assessment of handwriting is on-going assessment because any errors or inconsistencies can be addressed. In addition to this, children are also taught to monitor and reflect upon the quality of their own work and that of others.

Children's handwriting books are marked by the teacher or Teaching Assistant ideally during handwriting practise where mistakes can immediately be identified and points for improvement shared with the child. Handwriting targets may be set by teachers where appropriate and shared with children. Teachers use Assessment for Learning to ensure children move through the different developmental stages as appropriate to their needs.

SEN

Children experiencing difficulties (e.g. poor fine motor skills) will be given extra help in 1:1 or small group situations whenever possible. Handwriting interventions will be considered for these children. Additional practise sheets or activities may be shared with parents, to use at home, if requested or if staff feel this would support progress. In cases of difficulty advice may be sought from the SENCO.

Presentation

Presentation of work is an important aspect of children's learning. The quality of presentation reflects the children's skills and the pride they take in their work. How work is presented will depend on the learning purpose and the audience.



All adults will:

- encourage children to take a pride in their work. We set them clear guidelines for each piece of work so they know what is expected of them.
- ensure they have the appropriate materials necessary for producing the best quality of work. (Good pencils, rulers and appropriate paper for different tasks).
- provide them with a variety of audiences so that they encouraged to present good work at all times (e.g. other classes, parents, community, notice boards, display)
- encourage children to look after their work and keep their work clean.
- Teach presentation skills explicitly and embed across the curriculum

Learning Intentions

All children's work must be clearly linked to the learning intended during that lesson. Therefore work will begin with a Learning Intention e.g. I can retell a familiar story/I can count to 20. Learning Intentions written by the children and dates on work must be underlined. *NB Pencils to be used for underlining*

Sheets of paper

Sheets of paper used in class, must begin with the Learning Intention and be clearly dated, then inserted neatly into relevant books. A4 sheets must be cut down to fit in A4 books without overlap.

Corrections

As we celebrate errors as part of the children's learning journey, we will encourage the children to let us see and discuss those errors. Therefore, children will be asked to put a neat line through any mistakes and to place the correction next to the error. Rubbers may be used with permission from an adult, as we are aware that mistakes in a piece of work can cause upset. Also, subjects like art, DT - and at times maths - may require the use of a rubber to get the desired effect or to draw a shape precisely.

Appendix 1

Presentation of work guidelines

Year Group	Written Work	Maths Work
Writing implement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pencil until Pen License has been granted in upper KS2 • From Year 4 children begin to experiment with handwriting pens in their Handwriting sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pencil at all times
Reception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain paper or paper with lines drawn in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain paper
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide lined paper • All work to begin with the learning intention and date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large squared paper • One digit per square, when the children are showing careful and accurate number formation • All work to begin with the learning intention and date
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide lined paper • Line guides to be used with plain paper • All work to begin with the learning intention and date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large squared paper • All work to begin with the learning intention and date • One digit per square
Key Stage 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lined paper with a margin • Line guides to be used with plain paper and margins to be used • All work to begin with the learning intention and date (children may become more responsible for this as they move into upper Key Stage 2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small squared paper • All work to begin with the learning intention and date • One digit per square • Work evenly spaced and numbered