



St. Helen's Primary School Handwriting and Presentation Policy

Rationale

"Handwriting is a tool that has to work. It must be comfortable, fast and legible."

Angela Webb, Chair of the National Handwriting Association

Introduction

Neat, well-formed handwriting and presentation of written work helps to raise standards. In addition, pupils take pride in and have a sense of ownership of their work. Pupils must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility: difficulty with this will limit fluency and inhibit the quality and quantity of their work. It is also important that handwriting is a skill that requires little effort, so that creative and physical energy can be focussed on content rather than upon the act.

In KS2 we adhere to a cursive handwriting style based on the recommendation of the British Dyslexia Association.

The key advantages are:

- By making each letter in one movement, children's hands develop a physical memory of it making it easier to produce the correct shape.
- Because letters and words flow from left to right, children are less likely to reverse letters which are typically difficult (eg b/d or p/q.)
- There is a clearer distinction between capital and lower case letters.
- The continuous flow of writing ultimately improves speed and spelling.

Background

"Handwriting is a skill, which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Given effective teaching, handwriting can be mastered by most pupils by the time they are seven or eight years old enabling them, with practice, to go on to develop a faster and more mature hand ready for secondary school and adult life."

The surest way to ensure consistent teaching and the development of legible, fluent joined handwriting throughout the school is to have a written policy agreed and put into practice by all staff... Handwriting is a movement skill... This is why children need to practice handwriting movements correctly and often."

The first handwriting lessons are vital and the most important issue is to ensure that the children we teach learn to form the letters of the alphabet with the correct sequence of strokes from the beginning... The correct formation of all letters needs to become quite automatic and may require a lot of practice"

(Quote taken from 'Developing a handwriting policy for the primary school by Suzanne Tiburtius, Information Officer for the National Handwriting Association)

Policy Aims

- Raise standards in writing across the school
- Ensure a consistent teaching approach to handwriting and presentation of work
- Adopt a whole-school approach to handwriting

For pupils to:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting
- Develop flow and speed whilst writing so that eventually pupils are able to write with confidence and accuracy independently

Implementation

- Handwriting is a skill and as such is taught alongside spelling, grammar or phonics objectives.
- Teaching generally occurs across all lessons, when necessary, although shared and guided writing also provides additional opportunities for the modelling and monitoring of handwriting.
- Correct modelling of the agreed style by the teacher is very important; handwriting is essentially a movement skill, it is therefore not sufficient to require pupils to copy models from a published scheme or worksheet.

The role of the teacher:

- To follow the school policy to help each child develop legible and fluent handwriting
- To provide direct teaching and accurate modelling
- To provide resources and an environment which promotes good handwriting
- To observe pupils, monitor progress and determine targets for development

Continuity and Progression

This grid provides specific detail regarding our expectations in each of the phases. This guidance is used by teachers alongside the National Curriculum 2014 Programmes of Study (see Appendix 1.)

Stage	Provision and Expectations
EYFS	The emphasis at this stage is with movement and fine motor skill development. Letter formation (starting at the right entry point and then moving in the right direction) learned at this early stage becomes automatic and has a profound influence on later fluency and legibility. Pupils are taught to print. To aid movement, close attention is given to pencil grip, correct posture, the positioning of the paper and the organisation of the writing space. Teachers are vigilant in ensuring that bad habits do not become engrained and that the specific needs of left-handed pupils (for example, additional tracking and tracing of letters at the pre-writing stage) and those with special educational needs are met. In the pre-communicative stage pupils play with writing. These experiments are recognised and praised as an important stage in the child's understanding that marks on paper convey meaning. Pupils are given the opportunity to experiment with a range of writing materials and implements; a multi-sensory approach is used to help pupils feel the movement in the hand.
Key Stage 1	Handwriting Building on the foundation stage, pupils at Key Stage 1 develop a legible style. In Year 1, they may begin join digraphs and trigraphs when they learn them, if they are ready. This is achieved in Year 1 by developing a comfortable and efficient pencil grip and by practising handwriting in conjunction with spelling and independent writing. • Correct letter orientation, formation and proportion are taught in line with the school's agreed handwriting style (see Appendix 2). Handwriting practice is to be carried out in writing books or on whiteboards/paper. • Children in Year 1 are encouraged to experiment with a range of pens and pencils for writing and with support from the teacher select the tool that enables them to be most successful in their handwriting for regular work. Presentation By the end of Year 2 we aim that: • All work in books should be dated with the short date • Dates should be written at the top of the page • The learning objective should be written or stuck in preceding each piece of work • Lines are always drawn with a ruler and pencil • Mistakes are crossed out with a single line • One square should be used for each digit in Maths books
Key Stage 2	Handwriting The target for children in Key Stage Two is to produce a fluent, consistently formed style of fully cursive handwriting with equal spacing between the letters and words. • Handwriting practice, where taught discreetly, is to be carried out in writing books.

	• Children in years three and four will be supported to select the most appropriate tool to ensure success in handwriting with support from the teacher. • In years five and six children will be expected to use a black pen to complete the majority of class work using a cursive style Presentation English/Topic • All work in books should be dated with the long date and this should be underlined • The date should be written at the top of the page • The learning objective should be written before each piece of work and underlined • Lines are always drawn with a ruler • Mistakes are crossed out with a single line • Part pages of work should be used and the next piece of work started underneath unless it is necessary to start a new page • If pupils use pen for writing this should be black (by the end of year 4 we would expect all pupils to be writing in black pen ready for transition into year 5) • Pupils must use black pen for all writing at the discretion of the class teacher (years 5/6) Presentation Maths • All work in writing books should be dated with the short date and this should be underlined • The date should be written at the top of the page • The learning objective should be written before each piece of work and underlined • Lines are always drawn with a ruler • Mistakes are crossed out with a single line • Part pages of work should be ruled and the next piece of work started underneath unless it is necessary to start a new page • Pencils are used for all work • One square should be used for each digit • Fractions should be written in columns
--	--

Resources

To aid pupils' handwriting we have purchased a site license for 'Joinit' software. We use font C6 (see Appendix 2)

- This is loaded on to all computers in the school and the default settings for individual letter formation are as agreed
- Teachers should use the pack of resources provided, including alphabet strips, phoneme picture mat and alphabet mat
- Teachers could use the Teach Handwriting www.teachhandwriting.co.uk/ website which can be used to model the formation of the letters and to print worksheets
- Teachers must be careful to select the correct letters in line with the agreed letter formation.
- Teachers and Teaching Assistants must also model by hand the letter formation
- Children should see a range of different fonts and writing styles

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and a specific individual or group programme is drawn up in consultation with the SENDCo. Thicker triangular pencils, pencil grips and wider lines will be used by children experiencing problems writing alongside other activities to develop their fine motor skills.

Left-handed pupils

Teachers should be 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

- 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 should be alert to the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them.

The role of parents and carers

The Foundation Stage teachers play an important role in communicating this at an early stage, for example, to ensure that parents are informed and encouraged to offer good models to their pupils by

- Using only capital letters for the beginning of names
- Practising drawing patterns together
- Playing joining up games which encourage left to right directionality.

All members of staff (including teaching assistants, supply teachers, students) are provided with appropriate writing models and are expected to promote the agreed handwriting style by their own example.

Monitoring and Evaluation

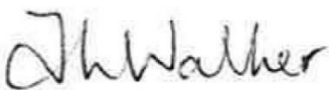
This will be undertaken by the class teacher on an on-going basis.

The coordinator in charge of English will carry out regular work scrutiny.

When undertaking work scrutiny coordinators and senior leaders will monitor all subjects for neat presentation and the use of cursive writing in KS2.

Review

This policy is written in consultation with the school community and will be reviewed as necessary.

Signed:  Headteacher

This policy was adopted at a meeting of:	FGB of St Helen's Primary School
held on:	10 th November 2022
Print name: Signed on behalf of the FGB:	

Appendix 1

The National Curriculum

Year	Programme of study
EYFS	Children are to take part in activities that develop fine and gross motor skills
1	Pupils should be taught to: • sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly • begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place • form capital letters • form digits 0-9 • understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (ie letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these
Notes and guidance (non-statutory) Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the writing implement (pencil, pen) should not be too large for a young pupil's hand. Whatever is being used should allow the pupil to hold it easily and correctly so that bad habits are avoided. Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs.	
2	Pupils should be taught to: • form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another • start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined • write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters • use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters
Notes and guidance (non-statutory) Pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.	
3 and 4	Pupils should be taught to: • use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined • increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, [for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant, and that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch]
Notes and guidance (non-statutory) Pupils should be using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which pupils are able to write down what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.	
5 and 6	Pupils should be taught to: • write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: • choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters • choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task
Notes and guidance (non-statutory) Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version. They should also be taught to use an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra, and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form.	

i l t u

c a d g s

b h m n r p

j y

v w

e x z