



# Handwriting Policy

**Person responsible: English leader**

**Ratified by the governing body: Spring 2021**

**Date for review: Spring 2024**

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Anne-Marie Renshaw'.

**Reverend Anne-Marie Renshaw  
Chair of Governors**

## **HANDWRITING POLICY**

### **Overall Aims**

A flexible, fluent and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with confidence and creativity. As such, we actively teach handwriting as part of the English curriculum through discrete weekly lessons and additional small group catch up sessions in KS2, and daily lessons in KS1. Handwriting is a developmental process with its own distinctive stages of progression from readiness for handwriting, through to letter joins, practising speed and fluency and higher presentation skills.

To develop a clear, legible style of writing, children are taught to;

- hold a pencil comfortably; promoting a legible style that encourages writing from left to right, from top to bottom of the page and starting and finishing letters correctly
- develop a consistent size and shape of letters and a regularity of spacing between letters and words
- join letters correctly
- develop greater control and fluency as they become increasingly confident.

Since handwriting is an essential movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed handwriting style by all adults is very important.

Considerations when teaching handwriting:

- (a) Pencil grip and tension;
- (b) Writing pressure;
- (c) Clarity of the stroke;
- (d) Orientation of the paper for left/right handed children;
- (e) Body posture.

### **FOUNDATION STAGE**

Children will begin the Foundation Stage with a wide variety of writing skills ranging from simply making marks to writing their own name unaided. They will move from gross to finer motor skills using a variety of methods. They need opportunities to make marks in their own way and to gradually refine these into recognisable patterns and eventually individual letters.

All Foundation Stage staff, work with the children on entry to make sure the children are using the correct pencil grip and they support those children who need help learning how to hold a pencil correctly. When they are demonstrating how to form letters or write words staff will use the school's cursive style of letter formation.

The children start by working on a variety of large arm movements for example using ribbons to make patterns in the air to build up the muscles in their arms and shoulders. They then begin "funky fingers" activities which are designed to build and support development of fine motor skills. These may include use of resources such as sand trays and sticks (or fingers), paper, paint and large brushes, modelling materials, blackboards and chalk. The children then begin to learn how to write their name before starting to learn

individual letter formation following the school's cursive letter formation scheme. They will be taught the use of capital letters for names and beginning of sentences.

### **KS1**

Children are encouraged to use the cursive unjoined script initially. Once they are able to form most letters correctly the children are introduced to joined handwriting. By Year 2 children should be moving towards a joined handwriting style and be able to write on lined paper with a reasonable degree of accuracy.

Children need to be made aware of:

- (a) Where the letter starts;
- (b) Where the individual letter stands with regard to the baseline;
- (c) Ascenders and descenders - lined paper will assist;
- (d) Spacing and finger space between words;
- (e) Consistent writing size;
- (f) Capital letters and their appropriate use

Correct formation is modelled during whole class sessions. Handwriting and spelling are linked during these sessions. Children are given regular opportunities to practise these skills as part of the English lesson and during 'Early bird' work. In Year 1 handwriting practice may be sent home.

### **KS2**

In KS2 children are encouraged to join their handwriting. Correct formation is modeled during whole class sessions and handwriting practice takes place during regular handwriting sessions as part of the English session. Children are also given regular opportunities to practise handwriting during 'Early bird' work.

Handwriting pens are introduced during Year 5/6 but only when children are able to write fluently, in a joined script, with the correct letter formation. Allowing a child to use a handwriting pen should be based on evidence from their writing throughout the curriculum, not solely in their handwriting books. 'Pen licences' are awarded to encourage self-esteem and challenge. Whilst there is continued emphasis on using the movements of handwriting to support spelling through the revision of common letter patterns, children will also be given opportunities to develop speed and accuracy.

By Years 5 and 6, it is expected that most children will be writing fluently and joining their writing across the curriculum. In these year groups the emphasis is on increasing speed, developing presentation skills and learning how to use different styles for different purposes. In Year 6 children with a pen licence may use pen of their choice with approval of the class teacher. They should be developing their own handwriting style.

#### **Left Handed Children**

Left-handed children will not in any way be discouraged from favoring the left-hand in their work. They may need to position their paper at an angle on the table. The tripod grip (thumb and first finger grip the pencil, which then rests on the side of the second finger) should be encouraged.

The school uses the 'join it' programme.