

Goddard Park

Community Primary School

An Integrated Academy and Children's Centre



Headteacher: Mike Welsh

Everybody learns, everybody cares

Handwriting Policy

Reviewed: Spring 2017

Aims

As a school our aims in teaching handwriting are that the pupils will:

- Develop good posture for writing.
- Develop an efficient pencil grip.
- Form letters and joins correctly.
- Develop a legible and fluent style of handwriting.
- Distinguish ascenders and descenders.
- Achieve consistency in terms of the size of letters.

The Joining Style

The school handwriting is modelled on the font Joined 11a

Which letters join?

Joins are made **both to and from** the following letters:

a b c d e f h i k l m n o r t u v w

Joins are made **to but not from** the following letters:

g j p q s x y z

Children in Year 6 who have an established joined handwriting are able to join to and from these letters.

The 4 basic joins:

1. Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. in, on
2. Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. at
3. Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. on
4. Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. the 'eb' in z-eb-ra

Letter formation and joins will be learnt alongside the RWI programme.

Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

Foundation Stage

Children are encouraged to:

- Develop gross motor control
- Develop fine motor control
- Use a range of mark making tools such as pencils, pens and crayons, with confidence and enjoyment
- Develop a recognition of pattern
- Develop a language to talk about shapes and movements
- The main handwriting movements involved in the three basic letter shapes; l, c, and r

- Enable the children to hold a pencil near point between first two fingers and thumb and uses it with good control.

In **FS2** the children continue to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding from **FS1** in addition to:

- Learning letter formation alongside phonics RWI
- Write their first name, using a Capital letter for the beginning and correct letter formation
Sessions should be fun, varied and multi-sensory.

At Year One

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’ (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.
- Write with spaces between words accurately
- Use the spacebar and keyboard to type their name and simple texts
- Begin to join letter sets

At Year Two

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
- 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.
- Form and use basic handwriting joins
- Word process short narrative and non-narrative texts

At Year 3

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 and quality of their handwriting, e.g. by ensuring that
- the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.

By the end of Year 3, pupils should be expected to use joined handwriting throughout their independent writing.

At Year 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 and quality of their handwriting, e.g. by ensuring that
- the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.

At Year 5-6

Pupils should be taught to:

- Write legibly, fluently, with increasing speed and personal style by:
 - a. choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding, as part of their personal style, whether or not to join specific letters
 - b. choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task (e.g. quick notes, letters).

Ensure that pupils continue to practise handwriting and are 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. Make sure that they are clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task (e.g. quick notes or a final handwritten version). Ensure that they are also taught to use an unjoined style (e.g. for labelling a diagram or writing an email address) and capital letters (e.g. for filling in a form).

Pen license

All children will write in pencil until they are consistently joining and meeting the Goddard Park's handwriting aims. When a teacher and pupil feel the pupil has achieved the aims and have at least 10 pieces of work to demonstrate this, they can apply for a pen license from the Literacy Co-ordinator (Appendix C) If successful they will receive a pen and certificate in assembly from the head teacher or literacy co-ordinator.

Teaching and Learning

We teach handwriting as a specific skill and as an independent task. Handwriting will be explicitly taught for 10 minutes at the start of two literacy lessons per week and followed up with an independent morning task the following day e.g.

Tuesday literacy – Wednesday early morning work

Thursday literacy – Friday early morning work.

Basic structure of a handwriting session:

- Relaxation/warm up, see Appendix B
- Posture check, feet flat on the floor, back touching the chair
- Teacher modelling
- Children practising independently with teacher model in red handwriting books.

Inclusion

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and provision will be made for this in Individual Education Plans [I.E.P.'s]. Teachers of children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills should liaise with the SENCO/Literacy co-ordinator to develop a programme designed for the individual child. This may involve extra handwriting sessions and access to extra resources. Other areas that could be considered are posture, lighting, angle of table etc. Outside agencies can be contacted where appropriate.

All 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.
- **Developing Early Writing** page 161 has further guidance

Teachers are alert to the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Teachers demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

The learning environment

In all classes, suitable materials are available for pupils to work at their own tables. **A model of the agreed handwriting style should be displayed in all classrooms** (Appendix D)

The role of parents and carers

Parents and carers are introduced to the school's handwriting style through a leaflet. The Foundation Stage staff play an important role in communicating this at an early stage, to ensure that parents are informed and encouraged to offer good models to their children by using only capital letters for the beginning of their names.

All members of staff are expected to promote the agreed handwriting style by their own example.

The contribution of handwriting to other aspects of the curriculum

ICT

The growth in the use of word processing and desktop publishing has increased pupils' awareness of the importance of presentation and the variety of handwriting styles/fonts available. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate a range of fonts and to select whatever is appropriate to suit particular purposes.

Teachers discuss handwriting and presentation in all subjects and aim to model good handwriting themselves. Teachers are **explicit** about different types of handwriting for example, personal note-taking or best handwriting for presentation, but remember not all the children will be able to achieve this in Key Stage one. Teachers give handwriting a high priority in classroom displays. ***The use of rubbers is discouraged. Mistakes are indicated by marking through with one neat horizontal line.***

Teachers aim to make handwriting lessons relevant to the curriculum, by providing a purpose to the work where possible, encouraging the children to view handwriting as part of an overall presentation policy.

Writing on an interactive whiteboard

Accurate handwriting using this technology takes practice. Here are some tips:

- Make sure you can calibrate the board and change the thickness of the pen or stylus.
- Be aware of the legibility of different 'ink' colours. Red, for example, can be hard to read from a distance.
- Press firmly and hold the pen or stylus at a 90° angle.
- Stand to one side of the board when writing so all children can see.
- Explore the templates or gallery in your IWB software — they will include lined and squared paper that will help guide your handwriting and offer a better model.

Appendix A

Activities and exercises to develop Gross Motor Control:

Gross Motor Control is the term used to describe the development of controlled movements of the whole body, or limbs such as the legs or arms. Of particular importance in relation to handwriting is the development of good posture and balance. Activities such as:

- Dancing and skipping
- Running and jumping to music
- Use of small apparatus e.g. throwing, rolling, catching, kicking and bouncing balls
- Cycling
- Gripping climbing frames
- Building with large-scale construction kits
- Hammering
- Consolidate vocabulary of movement by talking about movements such as, *going round and round, making curves, springing up and sliding down, making long, slow movements or quick, jumpy movements*
- Make large movements in the air with arms, hands and shoulders with dance ribbons, use music

Fine Motor Control is the term used to describe smaller movements, usually of the hand and fingers (or of the feet and toes).

Activities and exercises to develop Fine Motor Control:

- Folding paper
- Cutting out shapes from paper and card
- Fitting things into frames like geometric shapes
- Model making
- Building and stacking bricks
- Screw toys and wood working tools
- Pegboards
- Modelling with malleable materials like Playdoh, plasticene and clay
- Drawing in sand and sand and water play in general, including sieving, pouring and picking up toys using tools e.g. fishing rods and cranes
- Sewing and weaving
- Chopping and peeling when cooking
- Develop the pincer movement by using tweezers to pick up sequins, beads and feathers, sprinkling glitter, sand and salt
- Scribbling and drawing with chalk, dry wipe pens, felt tip pens and paints on small, large boards and easels and on small and large paper
- Playing with tactile and magnetic letters
- Puzzles
- Games and miming involving finger and wrist movement e.g. finger puppets
- Use increasingly finer tools to make patterns of lines

Appendix B

Hand gym/miming activities to relax fingers and hands before writing

- Washing
- Wringing, rubbing, shaking and folding clothes
- Brushing hair
- Stroking a cat
- Playing a musical instrument
- Playing with snow, bubbles, feathers, balloons
- Picking up sweets to put in a dish or your mouth

Later on:

- Sit in the writing position but with arms dangling limply. While in this position let the hands flutter loosely
- Let the forearms lay limply on the table in the correct writing position. Raise and lower the elbows several times
- Place elbows on the table with the forearms held upright. Let the hands flap loosely backwards and forwards
- Clench and unclench the fists
- Drum lightly with fingers on the table
- Circle the hands, inwards, then outwards
- Hold the pen in the tripod grip lightly. With the forefinger tap the pencil lightly

Appendix C – Pen license application form

Name _____

Class _____

Address _____

All about me!

Write down your favourite poem or paragraph from a book.

Please bring your literacy book as well as the form.

Good luck!

Mrs Grove-Welsh



Appendix D – Handwriting freeze

a b c d e f g h i j
k l m n o p q r s t
u v w x y z

A B C D E F G
H I J K L M N
O P Q R S T U
V W X Y Z