

Old Fletton Primary School Handwriting Policy March 2017

Handwriting in the classroom

The skill of handwriting needs to be taught. It is not a skill that comes naturally or a skill that will develop without practise.

Effective teaching of handwriting can only be achieved through modelling. Teachers must demonstrate letter formation and joins regularly and children must practice by carefully copying and repeating. It is important to observe children writing to ensure they are forming letters correctly.

Aims:

1. To know the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively
 2. To write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed by;
- Having a correct pencil grip
 - Knowing that all letters start from the top, except d and e which start in the middle
 - Forming all letters correctly
 - Knowing the size and orientation of letters

Teaching Time

There should be a minimum of a 5 to 10 minute handwriting session on a **daily** basis during literacy to practise learnt skills.

Model used

Old Fletton Primary school uses The Nelson Thornes Handwriting Scheme with the following letter formation.

Lower case Letters

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Capital Letters

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

Handwriting across school

The National Curriculum English Programmes of Study provide guidance on teaching handwriting:

Foundation pupils should be taught to:

- hold a pencil correctly in their preferred hand
- Form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.
- Begin to control the size of letters and sit letters on a line.

Year 1 pupils should be taught to:

- Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
- 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
- Make links with phonics and spelling

Year 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 not joined
- 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

Year 3-4 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 not joined
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, e.g. by ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.

Year 5-6 pupils should be taught to:

- Write legibly, fluently, with increasing speed and personal style by:
- 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
- Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task (e.g. quick notes, letters)

Break Letters

The break letters (letters that aren't joined from) are:

b g j p q x y z s

Note: Children must be taught individual letters first so that they see them as individual units BEFORE learning to join.

Examples of the break letters

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

A handwriting practice sheet with four rows of words written in cursive on lined paper. Each row contains two words. The words are: big, green, jelly, happy, unique, xylophone, zebra, swans. The words 'unique' and 'xylophone' are written on the same line, with 'unique' on the left and 'xylophone' on the right. The words 'zebra' and 'swans' are written on the same line, with 'zebra' on the left and 'swans' on the right. There are two empty rows of lined paper at the bottom of the sheet.

Examples of the joins

I fell asleep in class
today
as I was awfully bored
I laid my head upon
my desk
and fell asleep and snored

Assessment

Phase leaders in team meetings should monitor children's writing and presentation in books regularly. The following should be considered:

1. Is the writing generally legible?
2. Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
3. Are the joins made correctly?
4. Are the spaces between the letters, words and lines appropriate?
5. Is the size of the writing appropriate?
6. Is the writing properly aligned?
7. Are the writing standards achieved by the majority of pupils in line with the Level Descriptors in the National Curriculum?

Links to spelling

Linking handwriting with spelling is one of the most powerful ways of developing the visual memory. Handwriting should be practised using letters, blends, strings or digraphs so that patterns are internalised.

A spelling strategy that links particularly well to handwriting is:

Look – Say – Cover – Write – Check

The child:

Looks at the word carefully

Says the word

Covers the word so that it can't be seen

Writes the whole word from memory

Checks the word is written correctly

If not, repeat.

Pen Licence

Children can earn a pen licence once they have demonstrated correctly joined handwriting according to their year group expectations. Once they receive a licence, they are able to write in all books using a pen (with the exception of maths). The children keep this licence, even when they change year groups, as long as their standard of handwriting remains appropriate to their year group expectations. If their handwriting style drops below these expectations, their pen licence will be revoked until the expectation is met again. As recognition of their pen licence, children will receive a labelled pen and a badge.

