

Learning for Ourselves, Respect, We Can



Handwriting Policy

Reviewer: Liz Holland

Reviewed and approved by Full Governors:

Adopted by Governors on: January 2021

Next Update:

Lyndhurst First School

Handwriting Policy

Aims

It is the aim of this school that every child should be enabled to develop a fluent legible style of handwriting. We will provide opportunities for children to develop, practise and perfect skills and provide targeted support to any child experiencing difficulty.

We believe that a good handwriting style also enables good spellers, as children learn spellings through 'muscle memory'; therefore this policy will also make reference to spelling.

Implementation

At Lyndhurst we know that, for children to be able to develop a neat, legible handwriting style they need to be able to control and develop their gross and fine motor skills. Therefore, handwriting will begin in the foundation stage with a clear emphasis on the gross motor skills which will then lead onto their fine motor control. Through rigorous planning it will be evident that the children will always have access to developing these skills in all areas of their learning. Before children can begin to control their handwriting skills they need to have explored a wide range of activities that will develop this co-ordination. Children also need to develop their core muscles as this supports good handwriting.

As children develop, the adults in the foundation stage will be able to use their knowledge and understanding to assess a child's progress. Children who need further support will have targeted intervention, but all the practitioners understand that the gross motor skills come before formal handwriting; therefore this skill will continue to be developed alongside skills that will develop their fine motor control.

When children are ready to start formal handwriting Lyndhurst will follow the 'scope and sequence' from Cambridge Penpals, (see appendix 1). This scheme acknowledges handwriting as a 'developmental process with its own distinctive stages of sequential growth'.

However, although we follow the Penpals scheme, there are some additional points to note that have been agreed by the staff:

- Handwriting will be taught three times a week.
- At least one of these sessions will be recorded in the handwriting books.
- The handwriting sessions will make strong links to phonics and spellings, either the high frequency words of the week or the spellings based on the phase they are working on from Letters and Sounds.
- Handwriting will be continually reinforced when children are writing so that they develop pride in their work and they make the links between presentation and their audience.

- Adults will correct poor pen grip.
- Children will use pen, even from the foundation stage. This is to enable children to develop fluidity.
- Children will sit at tables to practise handwriting with the correct seating posture.
- From Year 1 Spring term, all adults will use the joined script when writing with the children so they are beginning to familiarise themselves with the joined style and will always be exposed to how letters and words look when written. This includes using a joined style in the home school contact books to develop consistency. There should also be examples of joined writing on displays, (captions, labels headings written by an adult)
- Left handed writers should be seated together (where possible), or to the left of a right handed writer.
- Left handed writers should, (where possible) have their work slanted upwards and tilted to the right.

There is a separate left-handed policy, see appendix 2. This can also be found on the schools internet page, under 'Curriculum' then 'left-handed writers'.

Resources

The teachers will use a range of multi sensory resources to develop children's gross and fine motor skills and handwriting style. These may consist of: playing ball games, using bats and other sports equipment, swirling ribbons, playing with hoops, beanbags, parachute games, soft mo, finger paints, painting in shaving foam, large chalks, etc, (see Foundation stage policy for further resources and activities). These resources will continue to be used if a child is still experiencing difficulties in KS1.

Each child will have a handwriting book with lines. The lined books will get smaller as the child progresses and develops. Children are always given lined paper or line guides if using plain paper, depending on the nature of the task.

Children will be taught to use rulers to underline headings and when writing labels to develop presentational skills.

Handwriting cards identifying the adopted script will be given to all parents when their child enters the Foundation Stage. If a child joins part-way through a year the script will be given as part of general information that is sent home, so all parents are aware of how we teach handwriting. See appendix 3 and 4 for the agreed script in the Foundation Stage and KS1.

The handwriting cards will be used on the tables as prompts for the children when they are writing, but not just in handwriting sessions but also during extended writing opportunities.

The foundation stage will also make use of other forms of useful resources, e.g. 'espresso' and Bug Club teaching resources where short video clips can be seen of handwriting,

Joining Script

From Year 1 spring term, children will begin to develop the joined writing style (see appendix 3).

Joins are made **from** the following 18 letters (we do not teach the 'lead-in' stroke):

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

However, some of the letters are not taught as joins until year 2 and 3 due their more complex style, e.g. **b g j p q s x y**

Therefore they will be introduced as 'break' letters until the children are able to develop this style, (see appendix 3)

The role of parents and carers

When the children start school in the Early Years, the parents are given a 'Guide to formation' sheet which shows the formation of all the individual letters, without exit strokes. This sheet is fixed into the home/school communication book so that the parents can always access how the letters should look and be shaped. The Foundation Stage play an important role in communicating this at an early stage and will reinforce the correct handwriting formation when meeting with parents individually and through year group meetings at the beginning of the autumn term, e.g. the Six Weeks-in meeting and the Reading and Phonics workshop.

Further information can be found on our school website.

Inclusion

The vast majority of children are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and provision will be made for this in Individual Education Plans. Teachers of children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills should liaise with the SENDCO 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

Monitoring

The presentation of all work is monitored through work scrutinies and feedback is given to each year group to ensure progression. Staff are expected to use the agreed handwriting style, to provide a 'good model'.

Liz Holland
Literacy co-ordinator
January 2021

Appendices:

- Appendix 1: Penpals for handwriting: scope and sequence
- Appendix 2: Advice for left-handed writers
- Appendix 3: Penpals for handwriting: information for parents
- Appendix 4: Agreed script for years 1 and 2.