

**Hevingham and Marsham Primary Partnership School**  
**Hevingham Under 5's**  
**Handwriting Policy**

This policy reflects the school's English Policy. Handwriting should be, and is an integral part of children learning to read and write. At Hevingham and Marsham Primary Partnership School we understand the importance of teaching children how to write legibly and to eventually develop their own writing style.

**Our Aims**

1. To ensure that young children develop physical strength and grip to be able to control mark making tools
2. To know the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively
3. 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

**Early years**

Children begin to communicate from a young age using mark making. This can be with crayons, paint or mud. It is crucial that our EYFS environments support children's ability to choose to mark make in their continuous provision and for adults and children to celebrate their attempts. Opportunities to strengthen their hand muscles such as 'funky finger stations' will support dexterity therefore enabling children to quickly transition to using pens, pencils, paint brushes etc to progress their mark making.

**Teaching time**

There should be a **minimum** of 2 x 15 handwriting lessons each week with KS1 using daily phonics sessions to support their letter formation. Children who find handwriting difficult should be targeted for daily intervention. Hevingham and Marsham Primary Schools use the Nelson Thornes Handwriting Scheme with the following letter formation-

**Lower case letters**

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

## Capitals

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

## Numbers

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

## The Four Joins

1. to letters without ascenders
2. to letters with ascenders
3. horizontal joins
4. horizontal joins to letters with ascenders

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

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

b g j p q x y z s

NB children must be taught individual letters first so that they see them as individual units BEFORE learning to join.

## Paper

As motor skills increase then the size of writing should decrease. Children should start writing in A4 plain books then as their handwriting improves then lined exercise books should be introduced.

## Reception

All children should write in A4 books. These books should have pencil lines drawn on before the children write. These lines should be well spaced (about 2cms apart).

### Year 1

Children should start the year as above. *When they are ready* they should move on to wide lined exercise books. Handwriting books should be introduced at the appropriate time.

### Year 2

The majority of children should be ready to start the year in narrow lined books. For some children they will need to continue on wide lined books until ready and for a small number of children, particularly those with SEND) it may be necessary to use an A4 book.

All children should be allowed to use unlined paper *from time to time* so that they can practise to apply skills and consider issues of presentation and aesthetics.

### **Teaching Sequence**

- Hand and finger strength
- Physical preparation
- Tracing
- Patterns
- Over teacher's writing (highlighter)
- Under teacher's writing (directly under words – write in large letters, leave large spaces between words)
- Independence

*For the order of teaching letters and joins see the Nelson Thornes Teachers Handbook.*

### **Techniques for teaching letter formation**

- Model good handwriting all the time
- Demonstrate
- Talk through the process
- Encourage children to verbalise the process
- Children form letters in the air
- Finger trace over tactile letters
- Write over highlighter pen (or dotted letters)
- Draw round templates
- Write in sand with finger or stick
- Write with chalk on chalkboard
- Wax resist letters
- Form letters with pegs on pegboard
- Form letters with beads in malleable materials
- Finger trace the outline of letters on the back of the person in front of you

### **Getting ready to write**

#### Seating and posture

- Chair and table should be at a comfortable height
- The table should support the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor
- Encourage children to sit up straight and not slouch
- The height of the chair should be such that the thighs are horizontal and feet flat on the floor
- Tables should be free of clutter
- Rooms should be well lit

Left handed pupils should sit on the left of their partners

#### Pencil or Pen grip

- Children should write with a pencil in Early Years and KS1.

- Pens should be introduced in KS2.
- Pencils should be reasonably sharp and of a reasonable length
- A tripod grip is the most efficient way of holding a pencil
- If children are struggling with pencil grip, special grip supports may be used.

#### *For right handers*

- Hold lightly between the thumb and forefinger about 3cm away from the point
- The paper should be placed to the right tilted slightly to the left
- Use the left hand to steady the paper

#### *For left handers*

- Hold lightly between thumb and forefinger resting on the first knuckle of the middle finger
- Hold about 3cm from the tip
- The hand should be kept below the writing line
- The paper should be tilted slightly to the right at about 20 - 30°
- Use the right hand to steady the paper

NB It is very important that a right handed child is NOT seated on the left hand side of a left handed child as their elbows will collide!

*Please refer to Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book p10 for further information*

## **Assessment**

### **Individual assessment**

During each handwriting lesson, teachers need to work with a targeted group which will rotate each lesson. During this session, children will be coached on individual issues. Teachers also need to monitor and mark whole pieces of writing. The following should be considered:

- Is the posture correct?
- Does the child hold the pencil correctly?
- Does the child use the correct movement when forming and or joining letters?
- Are any letters reversed or inverted?
- Does the child write fluently and rhythmically?
- Is the writing easily legible?
- Is the pupil's handwriting development in line with the national expectations?

Each half term, children will be asked to copy a passage out into their best handwriting. This will be displayed in the class as a running record of their handwriting achievements.

At the end of each English teaching sequence children will complete work that will go on display. Part of the assessment of this work will be the element of handwriting. The following should be considered:

- Is the writing generally legible?
- Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
- Are the joins made correctly?
- Are the spaces between the letters, words and lines appropriate?
- Is the size of the writing appropriate?
- Is the writing properly aligned?
- Are the writing standards achieved by the majority of pupils in line with national expectations?

### **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.

Remember to use **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.

Presentation • DUM TUMS (Date Underline, Miss a line, Title, Underline, Miss a line Start) should be used throughout the school and appear on the left hand side of the page. See Appendix 3. • All children's work should be presented neatly with joined handwriting from Year 2 upwards. • All worksheets should be stuck in straight and tidy, no edges should stick out. • All books should be clearly marked with the child's name and subject either typed or in the teacher's handwriting.

### **Presentation**

Pupils will learn that different levels of presentation are appropriate for different pieces of work and different circumstances. However, pupils are expected to:

- Look after exercise books and not draw or scribble in or on them
- Increasingly plan their work to make it look attractive and well presented
- Use writing or drawing media that is approved and fit for purpose
- Use rulers to draw straight lines
- Set out, number and annotate work appropriately
- At appropriate times, pupils may be encouraged to experiment with alternative means of presenting their work for specific reasons.
- Cross through mistakes or editing alterations with a single line. Erasers should only be used very occasionally and with the express permission of an adult.

Teachers are expected to:

- Ensure that classrooms are well equipped with the essential tools that will assist pupils to create work with a high presentational standard
- Organise the classroom in such a way that materials and resources are easily accessible and systems for their return and maintenance are robust
- Ensure that children look after resources and materials so that they learn to respect equipment and good value for money is assured.

### **Resources**

Nelson Thornes Handwriting Teacher's Book

Nelson Thornes Handwriting: Developing Skills Books

Nelson Thornes Handwriting CD Roms

### **Role of Subject Leader**

The English Subject Leader is responsible for the development and monitoring of the Handwriting Policy to ensure a coherent handwriting approach across both schools. They can help teachers with their planning and is responsible for developing the school's policy. The SL will assist teachers by leading staff meetings, planning and leading INSET activities, providing consultancy and advice, and by supporting them in the classroom. The SL also ensures that all staff access the relevant CPD.

The Head teacher / Subject Leader will scrutinise planning, English work, summative displays and observe handwriting lessons. They will also gather the views of children in termly discussions.