School Motto

God shines within our hearts.
Jesus walks by our side.
The Holy Spirit gives us strength.

Growing in faith, serving with love, transforming our world: together in Christ.

Handwriting Policy 2027-29

OUR AIMS

- To develop high quality handwriting and good presentation of work across the curriculum
    - To form letters correctly, leading to a fluent, joined and legible handwriting style
    - To promote continuity and consistency in handwriting style and teaching methods

- To adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays / resources.
- To develop high teacher-expectations for the presentation of work

Effective teaching of handwriting offers the following benefits:

- When children have developed good handwriting, they are able to concentrate on language, grammar and punctuation, rather than how to write
- A significant impact on children's self-esteem, when they see beautiful writing which they have created with their own hand
- The huge effect of good handwriting on children's motivation and enjoyment for writing
- Develops a strong sense of pride which cannot be measured by attainment level or standardised testing
- Where children have good handwriting, and are proud of how their work looks, they become far more meticulous about spelling, punctuation, grammar and their use of language.
- When children take care to produce beautiful work they are more likely to take care in other areas of their life – e.g care for resources, care for each other.

As a school we use the achieving Excellence In Handwriting resources from ISHA to teach handwriting.

As soon as the children are ready, they should be taught to sit properly so they have the correct posture for writing, hold a pencil in the correct grip and develop a legible and joined handwriting style.

ESSENTIAL HABITS FOR DEVELOPING EXCELLENT HANDWRITING

1. **Two hands.** Insist on children always using two hands when writing**.** *One hand to hold the paper and one hand to write with.*
2. **Six feet.** Children must always keep six feet on the floor. *Their own two feet and the chair's four feet.*
3. **BBC.** Ensure that children always sit in the BBC position – *Bottom Back in Chair.*
4. **TNT.** *Tummy Near Table.*
5. **Paper position**. *The paper should be upright when the child is writing or at an angle not greater than 45 degrees.*

Children will be expected to take pride in their work whenever excellent presentation of work is expected. It is expected that all members of staff, class teachers and teaching assistants, model the school handwriting style at all times i.e. when writing on the board or in children's books. By the end of key stage 2, all children should be displaying an efficient, quick, neat and legible handwriting style that is effective in recording their ideas.

Components of the handwriting lesson

The lesson will consist of a two- minute warm up activity, followed by the main focus of the lesson, which will be the teaching of individual letters or joining pairs of letters. After this activity, there is a brief recap on aspects of the previous handwriting lesson.

Introduction to the lesson. *This* can take various forms

- A short motivational speech by the teacher, emphasising high expectations and good attitudes, using words such as pride and proud.
- Children engage in paired discussion for one minute, focusing on what they learned in the previous handwriting lesson.
- Children engage in a 30 second paired discussion about correct posture, good habits and correct pencil grip.
- Teacher/class question and answer session, focusing on correct posture, good and correct pencil grip.
- Teacher and class engage in question and answer session, recapping aspects of the previous lesson.

Warm up activity

This is a silent, focused activity to immerse children in good pencil control and prepare them mentally and physically for the lesson ahead. The warm-up activity consists of children drawing repeating patterns of tall, short and tail lines to develop focus, concentration and pencil control.

Main focus of the lesson

A good handwriting lesson has two main aspects:

1. The delivery of the lesson by an adult
2. Practical tasks undertaken by the children.

There should be an equal balance between the two during the lesson.

Teacher modelling of correct letter formation, using their very best handwriting. This is done very slowly so children can follow the point of the teacher's pen, to observe exactly how a letter is formed. When children recognise that their teacher regards this as of great importance, it motivates them to produce their own best.

The teacher will use the same lines for their modelling as the lines the children are using. These lines should be widely spaced so their modelling is large, which helps the children to see exactly how a letter is formed.

While the teacher is modelling on the board, they tell the children exactly where the letter starts, describing the journey of the pen, telling the children exactly where to finish the letter and constantly referring to the broken and solid lines.

Children practicing

The teacher modelling is followed by a short period of children practicing what they have just observed. This should be no longer than two minutes. It is unnecessary and counter-productive for the children to be practicing one thing for longer than this.

During practicing, the teacher must be on the move, observing and monitoring. Occasionally, further modelling for individual children is necessary. The teacher should aim to visit each child during a lesson. During this short period of practice, the teacher will give copious amounts of praise and encouragement to individual children, to groups of children and the whole class.

FREQUENCY OF HANDWRITING LESSONS

The lesson should last between 15 and 20 minutes. *Do a little, do it often'* is a key phrase. Handwriting must be regarded as valuable and time must be found to teach it effectively and successfully. After a summer holiday, it is important that strong foundations are laid for the year ahead and every class should do a handwriting lesson every day, for several weeks, in order to set the standards which are to be maintained throughout the year.

Year 1 classes will continue teaching handwriting intensively during the first half of the autumn term, but it may be appropriate for other classes to scale back on lesson frequency. This could mean reducing lessons to one per week in Key Stage 2 and two lessons per week in Key Stage 1, but with a continued emphasis on applying skills from handwriting lessons in writing tasks across the curriculum. In the Foundation Stage, activities take place throughout the day to develop gross motor skills, fine motor skills and pencil control.

After Christmas and Easter holidays, there should be a week where handwriting is taught daily, to re-establish high standards. Within this framework, there is flexibility, so that a teacher who recognises that standards have dropped in their own class uses their own professional judgement, in consultation with SLT, to re-establish high standards by having a week of daily handwriting lessons.

CONTINUITY AND PROGRESSION

In Foundation Stage 2, the emphasis is on movement and correct letter formation. Letter formation (starting at the correct entry point and then moving in the right direction) learned at this early stage becomes automatic and influences later fluency and legibility. Close attention is given to pencil grip, correct posture and paper position. Children from YR upwards are taught to put joining lines on to letters which lead to joined writing later.

Key Stage 1. Building on the work done in the Foundation Stage, children at Key Stage 1 develop a clear, legible style of handwriting. This is achieved in Year 1 by developing a comfortable and efficient pencil grip and a strong emphasis on correct letter formation, size and proportion. By the end of year 1, we expect children to use ascenders and descenders correctly. In Year 2, children continue to build on the work done in FS and Year 1, They are also taught how to use joining lines so that they can start to join their letters when ready to do so.

Key Stage Two The target for children in Key Stage Two is to produce a fluent, consistently formed style of fully cursive handwriting with equal spacing between the letters and words.

CLASSROOM ORGANISATION

- Ensure that all children have good viewing of teacher modelling during handwriting lessons. Children must be either facing the board or sideways on to it.
- Children need to have enough desk space when they are writing. Ensure that desks are uncluttered.
- Ensure that children have appropriately sized furniture so feet are placed on the floor to give a strong base from which to work.
- Take left-handed children into consideration. Where children are sitting in pairs, the left-hander should be sitting to the left. *This ensures that both left and right- handed children have sufficient space to work comfortably.*
- Ensure that there is sufficient natural light in the classroom. *Blinds should only be closed if sunlight is shining directly into children's eyes.*
- Examples of children's writing is clearly visible in the classroom. This acts as a reward and motivates children to achieve high standards. High quality 'display work' also reinforces school expectations and shows that writing is a high priority in the school and valued.

HANDWRITING TOOLS

HB Pencils

- Pencils must always be sharp.
- Pencils must never be sharpened at both ends.
- Pencils must not be too small for the child's hand.
- Pencils do not go in children's mouths.

Pens

When children's handwriting in writing tasks across the curriculum is judged to be consistently of a high quality, they move on to writing with pen. The pen must be regarded as a special tool, a treasured, delicate tool; a tool that when respected and cared for, will move the presentation of work to a higher level. *If the child looks after the pen, the pen will look after the child!*

NEW MEMBERS OF STAFF

Newcomers require a comprehensive period of induction to the teaching of handwriting, consisting of:

1. Observing colleagues teach handwriting lessons, followed by paired discussion on teaching strategies modelled and how the lesson was structured.
2. Team teaching with more experienced colleagues.
3. Meeting with SLT members, focusing on the principles behind the whole school ethos of good presentation of work.
4. The new member of staff being provided with the *Excellence In Handwriting* booklet and all teaching materials, with clear explanation of how to use them.

Profile

Within school, we will have the following:

1. Displays of excellent handwriting

2. Non- negotiables based on the policy.

3. Review writing regularly

4. Articulation of accurate vocabulary

5. Celebrate success within class and whole assembly

6. Follow the letter formation process.

7. Liaise with home school using videos and in due course work shops within school.

Systems

Within school, we will have the following:

1. Peer feedback and assessment

2. Appropriate learning environment

3. Differentiation using the resources supplied through ISHA.

4. Consistency throughout all classes in the approach to teaching handwriting.

5. Consistency in resources.

6. Timetabled lessons.

7. Consistency in ensuring high standards in writing across all subjects.