

# FERNDALE PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL



## Handwriting Policy

**Ratified by Governing Body:** September 2023

**Reviewed Date:** September 2023

**Next Review Date:** September 2024

## Handwriting Policy - September 2023

Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. Handwriting skills should be taught regularly and systematically.

### **AIMS:**

At Ferndale Community Primary our aims in teaching handwriting are that the pupils will:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in accordance with Ferndale's chosen font.
- Develop flow and speed.
- Eventually produce the letters automatically and in their independent writing.

In order to achieve these aims, the following principles are followed:

### **Teaching and Learning**

- Children should experience coherence and continuity in learning and teaching across the School.
- Develop a recognition and appreciation of pattern and line and be given support in finding a comfortable grip.
- Understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly.
- Encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work and therefore study handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement.
- Be supported in developing correct spelling quickly through a multi-sensory approach to handwriting.
- Shown how to be able to write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.
- Encouraged use their skills with confidence and pride in real life situations.

## Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

### **Early Years**

Children take part in activities to develop their fine and gross motor-skills and recognition of patterns, for example, to form letters using their index finger in sand or using paint. Children should begin to learn how to correctly hold a pencil. Then how to use a pencil, and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters most of which are correctly formed (no flicks in/out). They should be given the opportunities to develop their handwriting to their full potential by learning letter formation alongside phonics daily. Resources around the classroom should be print not cursive writing.

### **Key Stage 1**

Teachers and support staff continue to guide children on how to write letters correctly, using a comfortable and efficient pencil grip.

In Year 1, children should use continue to learn to form letter correctly (no flicks in/out). They should sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly. They should learn to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place. They should learn to form capital letters and to form the digits 0-9. They should understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and practise these. Handwriting should be taught daily alongside phonics teaching. Resources around the classroom should be print not cursive writing.

In Year 2, children should form lower-case letters to the correct size relative to one another. Capital letters and digits should be written to the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters. Children should use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters. Handwriting should be taught daily alongside phonics teaching. Once children are forming letters correctly, they should start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes to join letters. Through weekly handwriting sessions, they should learn the four basic joins:

1. Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. in, on, at
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

## **Key Stage 2**

During this stage the children continue to have direct teaching and regular practice of handwriting. In year 3 and 4 the children should increase the legibility, consistency and quality of his/her handwriting e.g. by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant and that the lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.

In year 5 and 6 children should write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task. We aim for them to develop a clear, fluent style and by the end of Year 6 be able to adapt their handwriting for different purposes, such as: a neat, legible hand for finished, presented work, a faster script for note making and the ability to print for labelling diagrams etc. In year 6, pupils with a neat, legible handwriting will be given a pen license and will write in pen.

### Capital letters

Capital letters stand alone and are not joined to the next letter. Children must practice starting sentences and writing names using a capital letter and not joining the subsequent letter. This should be modelled by the teacher during Literacy and Phonics sessions.

A uniformed handwriting style should be consistent throughout the school and modelled by the teacher; this will be evident on display boards and in books.

### **Assessment**

Teachers assess handwriting on a regular basis (termly) to note progress against the learning objectives in the **English curriculum** and to determine future targets for improvement. Teachers aim to ensure that when marking written work, comments about neatness are kept in proportion in relation to those about content and/or meaning. Handwriting is assessed and recorded on target tracker.

### **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 'My Learning Plans' [MLP]. Teachers of children, whose handwriting is limited, by problems with fine motor skills, should liaise with the SENCO to develop a programme designed for the individual child. Pupils should only begin to join and use cursive writing when they are able to form all letters correctly.

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.

Teachers are aware of 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.

## **Resources**

'Letterjoin' provides a range of resources which can be adapted by each class to suit the needs of the children.

Please speak to the English co-ordinator for any additional resources required such as triangular pencils, pencil grips and pens.

***Reviewed September 2023***