

# Green Lane Primary School



## Handwriting Policy

(see also the presentation on teaching handwriting without writing, '*Supporting Pupils with Fine and Gross Motor Difficulties in the Classroom*')

Implementation date	Revision Level	Adopted by LGB	Review Date	Responsible Person
	V1.0			LW

## Overall Aims

A flexible, fluent and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with confidence and creativity. As such, we actively teach handwriting as part of the English curriculum through initial letter formation, lessons, quick reinforcing sessions and application every day. Handwriting is a developmental process with its own distinctive stages of progression from readiness for handwriting, through to letter joins, practising speed and fluency and higher presentation skills.

To develop a clear, legible style of writing, children are taught to;

- hold a pencil correctly & comfortably; promoting a legible style that encourages writing from left to right, from top to bottom of the page and starting and finishing letters correctly
- develop a consistent size and shape of letters and a regularity of spacing between letters and words
- join letters correctly
- develop greater control, fluency and speed as they become increasingly confident.

**Since handwriting is an essential movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed handwriting style by all adults is very important. We will never simply ask children to copy models from a sheet or practice book.**

### Considerations when teaching handwriting:

- Pencil grip and tension;
- Writing pressure;
- Clarity of the stroke;
- Orientation of the paper for left/right handed children;
- Body posture.

### Foundation Stage

Children will begin the Foundation Stage with a wide variety of writing skills ranging from making marks to writing their own name unaided.

They will move from gross to finer motor skills using a variety of tactile

methods. They will be provided with opportunities to make marks in their own way and to gradually refine these into recognisable patterns and eventually individual letters.

All Foundation Stage staff, including support staff, must be aware of directionality and when children are showing a firm interest in writing their name, they should be encouraged to use correct directionality.

To aid co-ordination, sand trays and sticks (or fingers), paper, paint and large chunky brushes, modelling materials, blackboards and chalk, shaving foam, triangular pencils should be used.

They will be taught the use of capital letters for names and beginning of sentences.

### **Suggested materials to develop gross and fine motor skills:**

- Sand trays/seeds and other tactile materials
- Letter shapes/feely letter shapes
- Large paper and brushes to make writing patterns
- Blackboards and chalk
- Plasticine, play dough, clay.
- Roller ball letters
- Following pattern guidelines

### **A Cursive Script:**

will be introduced as appropriate and will help prepare children for handwriting, consolidate their motor control and introduce letter shapes. It is expected that most children will be forming each letter correctly, with flicks, by the end of Reception.

#### **Year 1**

It is expected that by the end of this year, the majority will be writing unaided, using capitals where appropriate and presenting their written work legibly. In Year 1, children practise forming letters and are introduced to diagonal joins and latterly, horizontal joins both to letters with and without ascenders. The majority of pupils will be using wide lines to write on.

An introduction to joined writing can be started when a child has developed a consistent, clear print style, where letters are generally correctly formed. Children experiencing difficulties may continue to use a triangular pencil or an appropriate pencil grip.

#### **Year 2**

By Year 2 children should be consolidating a joined handwriting style and be able to write on lined paper with a reasonable degree of accuracy. They practise and build on Year 1 joins. They will be introduced to pens as appropriate.

### **Children need to be made aware of:**

- Where the letter starts;
- Where the individual letter stands with regard to the baseline;
- Ascenders and descenders - lined paper will assist;
- Spacing and finger space between words;

- Consistent writing size;
- Capital letters and their appropriate use

### **Year 3**

The introduction of pens for all will begin in Year 3. It is our aim that the majority of Year 3 have been taught the whole range of joins and will be developing a degree of accuracy and fluency by the end of the year.

In the first 2 terms, children will consolidate joins from Years 1 and 2 and will be taught to join parallel descenders and ascenders. The third term will focus on consistency of spacing, layout, speed and fluency practice. The majority of pupils will have a fluent, joined style by the end of Year 3.

### **Year 4**

Formation of capitals, lower case letters and the two basic join types (horizontal and vertical) should now be familiar and secure. The majority of children should be able to use joined-up writing for most of their work. Whilst there is continued emphasis on using the movements of handwriting to support spelling through the revision of common letter patterns, they will also be given opportunities to develop speed and accuracy.

### **Years 5 and 6**

By Years 5 and 6, it is expected that most children will be writing fluently and are joining their writing across the curriculum. In these year groups the emphasis is on increasing speed, developing presentation skills and learning how to use different styles for different purposes.

### **Left Handed Children**

Left-handed children will not in any way be discouraged from favouring the left-hand in their work. They may need to position their paper at an angle on the table. The tripod grip (thumb and first finger grip the pencil, which then rests on the side of the second finger) should be encouraged. Practise on a vertical blackboard could help this position.

### **Interventions**

Pupils should be regularly reminded to form letters correctly and to develop a joined, cursive style. This should be insisted upon through regular marking comments and individual interventions as required. Children may need the temporary support of a large/triangular pencil, a handwriting pen and/or a pen or pencil grip. When producing work for display etc, handwriting expectations should be reinforced.

### **General Reminder: Remember to check**

Are all the letters the same size?

Are all the down strokes parallel?

Are the height and length of ascenders and descenders regular?

Is the space between letters even? Is spacing between words even?

Is the writing a reasonable size?

Could presentation be improved?