

Handwriting Policy

Ermine Street Church Academy

First approved by Governors	14th March 2018
Policy to be reviewed every 2 years.	
Reviewed by Governors	

As a school we recognise that handwriting is an important skill and children's ability to write fluently for the rest of their lives depends on a good foundation of taught handwriting in the early years of their education.

We believe that handwriting is a developmental process with its own distinctive stages of progression from readiness for handwriting, through to letter joins, practicing speed and fluency and higher presentation skills. A flexible, fluent and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with confidence and creativity. This is an entitlement that needs skilful teaching if each individual is to reach their full potential at Ermine Street Church Academy.

Aims

Our aims in teaching handwriting are:

- For all children to develop a well-formed, legible style of handwriting in both joined and printed styles, with increasing fluency, confidence and speed.
- To raise attainment for all pupils in handwriting through a consistent approach.
- That all teachers and support staff must use and model the agreed cursive style of handwriting when writing on the board or marking work.
- That teachers, support staff and pupils use all opportunities for writing as handwriting practice in all writing across the curriculum.
- For all children's skills in handwriting to be reflected in the presentation of their work and their joy of writing.

In order to achieve this, children will be taught:

- To develop fine motor control;
- The importance of correct posture and paper position;
- To use a pen/pencil and to hold it effectively;

- To write from left to right and top to bottom on a page;
- To start and finish letters correctly;
- To form letters of consistent size and shape;
- The language of writing and how to use the correct terminology (e.g. ascenders);
- To put regular spaces between words;
- How to form upper and lower case letters;
- How to join letters correctly;
- How to write legibly in both joined and printed style;
- To use different styles of writing for different purposes;
- The importance of neat and clear presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively;
- To develop greater control and fluency as they become increasingly confident.

The handwriting style is CCW Cursive 22 / Joined 25.

Sample without joins:

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Sample with some joins:

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Sample with all joins:

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Refer to Key Stage / Year Group descriptors below for an explanation of when the style and joins are introduced.

Common Approaches:

- To be consistent in the way in which we form individual letters by following the school's cursive font;
- To follow the progression as set out below, using it for year groups but also applying the relevant stage to children who are not meeting expectations irrespective of age.
- Teaching the correct formation of the letters should be given highest priority and that this should be achieved by pupils before any attempt is made at joining.
- Correct modelling of the agreed handwriting style by all adults is very important.
- Intervention groups to operate in school to provide additional support, teaching and practise for those children who require it. Intervention measures are to be included in SEND ILPs where relevant.
- When required, advice will be requested from the SENDCo and then Occupational Therapists or other relevant agencies to help with specific individual problems.

Pencil/Pen Grip

The pen or pencil should be gripped comfortably between forefinger and thumb with the second finger below to steady it. If necessary, children will be provided with a pencil grip to help them. We use a range of grips and assess their suitability for each individual child.

Posture

Children should be encouraged to sit up straight with their feet on the floor. The non-writing hand must be used to steady the book or paper. Children who write using their left-hand should not be seated immediately to the right of a child who writes with their right-hand.



Pencil or Pen

Children all begin to write using a pencil and a whiteboard pen. This continues throughout the development period. When handwriting is considered to be consistently neat, fluent and correctly joined, the child is invited to use pen.

Foundation Stage

Children begin the Foundation Stage with a wide variety of writing skills ranging from simply making marks to writing their own name unaided. They will move from gross to finer motor skills using a variety of tactile methods. They need opportunities to make marks in their own way and to gradually refine these into recognisable patterns and eventually individual letters. In Reception, pupils will be prepared for handwriting by consolidating their motor control and introduced letter shapes. We aim for all children to be correctly forming each letter by the end of Reception. Handwriting should be taught alongside phonics; making use of the kinaesthetic learning to help children to internalise the letter shapes that go with the sounds. Children should write on plain surfaces and much later on wide-lined paper when they have the hand control to do it confidently.

A range of pre-writing activities opportunities must be provided in the learning environment to encourage and support children develop gross and fine motor skills, develop co-ordination and to promote pencil control and awareness of letter shapes and orientation.

Key Stage 1

Year 1

In Year 1, children continue to practise forming letters and are introduced to diagonal joins, horizontal joins both to letters with and without ascenders. An introduction to joined writing can be started when a child has developed a consistent, clear print style, where letters are generally correctly formed. They should practise handwriting in conjunction with phonics, spelling and independent writing, ensuring correct letter orientation, formation and proportion, in a style that makes letters easy to join.

Diagonal joins (the most common letter join - formed from the baseline)	used to join: a, b, c, d, e, h, i, k, l, m, n, p, s, t, u, z	to these letters: b, e, f, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, p, r, t, u, v, w, x, y, z
Horizontal joins (formed from the top of the letter)	used to join: o, r, v, w	to these letters: b, e, f, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, p, r, t, u, v, w, x, y, z

Year 2

By Year 2 children should be moving towards 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, learn joins from/to descenders and be introduced to break letters.

Descender joins (formed from the loop of a descender)	used to join: f, g, j, y	to these letters: b, e, f, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, p, r, t, u, v, w, x, y, z
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Children need to be made aware of:

- (a) Where the letter starts;
- (b) Where the individual letter stands with regard to the baseline;
- (c) Ascenders and descenders - lined paper will assist;
- (d) Spacing and finger space between words;
- (e) Consistent writing size;
- (f) Capital letters and their appropriate use.

Key Stage 2

In KS2 the children undertake formal handwriting practice once per week, most frequently using an Early Learning session, either as a whole class or in groups.

In Year 3 the emphasis is on building upon the joins established in Year 2 and using spellings as a basis for handwriting practise.

In Year 4 the emphasis is on ensuring excellent fluency, consistency in size and proportion and using joined writing for all writing except where other special forms are required.

In Years 5 and 6 National Curriculum guidelines assume handwriting skills should be established and that children should have their own developed cursive style. However, in reality this is not always the case. Children in Years 5 and 6 then will have opportunities to revisit the basics and work on the presentation side of their handwriting. Children should also be given opportunities to practise handwriting in conjunction with spellings.

Monitoring and Assessment

- The ongoing monitoring of children's handwriting is carried out by class teachers and Teaching Assistants.
- Subject and Senior Leaders include the standard of handwriting in their monitoring criteria when carrying out lesson observations, drop ins and learning scrutinies.

- Assessment of handwriting, against the age-related expectations contained within the National Curriculum, is an on-going process and will take place formally and informally, during the regular, focused handwriting sessions and across other curricular areas. This will provide evidence of children's progress and attainment, will serve to inform the children's future learning targets and provide information when reporting to parents.
- Handwriting is assessed as part of the writing SATs at the end of KS1 and KS2.