



Fen Ditton C. P. School

HANDWRITING POLICY

Policy Review Schedule	
Last Updated	Next Planned Review and Update
6 th Oct 2014	Oct 2017
Governor Signature:	

Fen Ditton CP School Handwriting Policy

Handwriting Policy Overview :

In line with the new primary curriculum statutory expectations (which take effect from Sept 2014) children must be taught to write with ease, speed and legibility. If they have difficulty, this will limit fluency and inhibit the quality and quantity of their work. It is important that the child's handwriting becomes a skill that ultimately requires little effort and thought so that creative and physical energy can be focused on the content of writing rather than upon the act. Cursive handwriting teaches pupils to join letters and words as a series of flowing movements and patterns.

The style is intended to be relatively quick and easy to learn, particularly when it is practised from an early stage. Pupils will learn to form individual letters appropriately and accurately first, and then during Year 1, begin to learn to join letters. This will usually be linked to phonic development. There is a clear link between spelling and handwriting. Handwriting skills will be taught regularly and systematically through the use of the PenPals handwriting scheme.

The PenPals schemes of work, relevant to each year group, and associated guidelines and resources are stored on the school's server and can be accessed (for all year groups) in the classroom by teachers via the computers and the interactive whiteboard (IWB). In addition, each teacher has been given supporting physical documents (pupil books, teacher notes, and a guided group work 'big book') to enable children to work on the examples they have seen on the IWB independently or in a small group session.

Aims:

We aim for children to:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting.
- 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

- Handwriting will be taught regularly and systematically in classes, groups (and sometimes individually for those making slow progress) as appropriate. **Early in each week, ideally on a Monday, the teacher will lead a whole class session for approx. 15-20 minutes to introduce the week's handwriting pattern or theme.** This will form the basis for independent work which the children can do in one of their group sessions during Guided Group reading. Those who find progress difficult can then be assigned a Teaching Assistant either individually or as part of a small group, at the teacher's discretion.
- Patterns are used initially, by writing with a variety of tools and using multisensory methods, to help free flowing hand motions.
- Correct pencil hold and letter formation are taught from the beginning and handwriting should be linked with spelling where possible.

- When marking or writing comments, members of staff should aim to use cursive handwriting as appropriate, in pupils' books and on the IWB (e.g. for the date and learning objective).
- Display writing throughout the school should include some cursive writing as well as computer generated writing, in line with the Penpals style.

Provision for left handed children:

At least 10% of the population are left-handed, the majority of whom are boys. Left-handed children should sit on the left side of right-handed children, so their elbows don't bump. They should be encouraged to find a comfortable orientation for their paper, usually slightly to the left of centre of their body, and to have their fingers about 1.5 cm from the point of their pencil.

Resources and Writing Materials:

- Children are given experience of a variety of writing tools (mainly pencils, but paintbrushes in foundation). Handwriting pens may be used in KS2, on the recommendation of the teacher and at the head-teacher's discretion when the pupil's progress in cursive writing is deemed suitable to maintain a flowing legible style. This is called a 'pen Licence'.
- Biro's are not used.
- Separate handwriting exercise books which 'scaffold' the formation of letter should not be used. The pupil's literacy book should be the main area to carry out hand-writing practice, to encourage consistency in handwriting.

Special Educational Needs:

Pupils with specific learning difficulties should find cursive handwriting useful because, once this skill has been achieved, the writing implement stays on the page for the majority of a word.

How handwriting is taught throughout the school:

Assessment

Throughout their time at Fen Ditton, samples of children's writing can be collected and moderated against the new Primary Curriculum criteria and the expectations of our PenPals handwriting scheme. As part of the school's assessment policy, samples of children's independent writing as well as evidence from formal handwriting lessons can be assessed termly to assess progress against curriculum expectations. Staff meetings can help evaluate and moderate handwriting and presentation on a regular basis. **A handwriting exercise should be conducted at the start of each new academic intake and a final assessment should be taken at the end (using the PenPals scheme's resources) to assess progress across the year.**

Handwriting: End of Year Expectations (by year group) from the New Primary Curriculum 2014:

Reception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils will develop fine and gross motor skills with a view to recognising letter patterns and forming individual letters, forming letters in the air, reinforced by brush work and then pencils.
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils should be taught to sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly • begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place • form capital letters • form digits 0-9 • understand which letters belong to which handwriting ‘families’ (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pupils should be able to form individual letters correctly, so establishing good handwriting habits from the beginning. Pupils should be taught to form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another. • start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined • write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters • use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.
Year 3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By year 3, “Joined handwriting should be the norm; pupils should be able to use it fast enough to keep pace with what they want to say.” • Pupils should be taught to use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined. • increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting [for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.
Year 5-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: • choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters • choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task