



Blackpool Gateway Academy

HANDWRITING POLICY

September 2025



Blackpool Gateway Academy is part of Fylde Coast Academy Trust

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Purpose:

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, practising speed and fluency and higher presentation skills. A flexible, fluent and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with confidence. This is an entitlement that needs skilful teaching if each individual is to reach their full potential at Blackpool Gateway Academy.

Aim(s):

- 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, guided by: The Penpals (Cambridge University Press) Handwriting scheme.
- 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.
- To make provision for left handed children to develop free flowing writing.
- For all children's skills in handwriting to be reflected in the presentation of their work and their joy of writing.

Formal handwriting skills will be taught regularly and systematically through the use of the PENPALS Handwriting scheme (Cambridge University Press).

Five stages are identified and these form the basic organisation of the scheme:

1. Readiness for writing: gross and fine motor skills leading to letter formation (Foundation)
2. Beginning to join (Lower KS1)
3. Securing joins (Upper KS1/Lower KS2)
4. Practising speed and fluency (Lower KS2)
5. Presentation skills (Upper KS2)

Opportunities for linking handwriting with early phonics and spelling work are fully exploited through Jolly Phonics sessions in Key Stage 1.

Procedures and practice:

Adaptation

Penpals takes a developmental approach to the teaching of handwriting so there is an opportunity to start where the children are. If children aren't ready for the age appropriate work then they should be working from an earlier book.

Inclusion

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and 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.

Recommended Timings:

Penpals lessons consist of a 15 minute whole class session followed by an independent activity session.

Children will then apply their handwriting skills within English lessons and other writing opportunities.

Reception - The development of gross and fine motor writing skills are continuous and ongoing everyday.

Letter formation will be taught using the Penpals for Handwriting materials:

Year 1 – 3 x 15 minute sessions per week

Year 2 – 3 x 15 minute sessions per week

Year 3 – 2 x 20 minute session per week

Year 4 - 2 x 20 minute session per week

Year 5 - 2 x 20 minute session per week

Year 6 - 2 x 20 minute session per week

Monitoring and Assessment

- The monitoring of the teaching of handwriting is carried out by Class teachers, SLT and English subject lead in line with the school development plan.
- Assessment of handwriting 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 and forms part of the judgement at the end of KS1 and KS2.