



Cribden House School Handwriting Policy

Introduction

This policy document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching of handwriting at Cribden House School.

At Cribden House we recognise that handwriting is an important skill and children's ability to write fluently for the rest of their lives depend 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 and creativity. This is an entitlement that needs skilful teaching if each individual is to reach their full potential.

Intent

Our intent in teaching handwriting is:

- For all children to develop a well-formed, legible style of handwriting in both joined (*if able*) and printed styles, with increasing fluency, confidence and speed.
- To raise attainment for all pupils in handwriting through a consistent approach, guided by The Twinkl Handwriting scheme, to the teaching of handwriting throughout the school.
- That teachers, support staff and pupils use all opportunities for writing as handwriting practise, regardless of subject.
- 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.

In order to achieve this, children will:

- Experience a 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.
- Be 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.
- Be encouraged use their skills with confidence and pride in real life situations.
- Follow the Twinkl Handwriting programme (*Zigzag Monster Letters, One-Armed Robot Letters, Ladder Letters, Curly Caterpillar Letters*).

Recommended Timings

Handwriting lessons consist of a 15-minute whole class session followed by a 15-minute independent activity session (*depending on the year group scheme being delivered*)

- Reception - The development of gross and fine motor writing skills is continuous and ongoing every day. Letter formation will be taught using the Write from the start or the introduction to Twinkl Handwriting.
- If following Year 1 scheme – 3 x 15-minute whole class sessions per week
- If following Year 2 scheme – 3 x 15-minute whole sessions per week
- If following Year 3/4 scheme – 2 x 25-minute sessions per week
- If following Year 5/6 scheme – 2 x 25-minute sessions per week

Common Approaches

- To be consistent in the way in which we form individual letters by following the Twinkl Handwriting guidance
- To follow the Twinkl Handwriting guidance for 'Joining letter sets' which builds on letter formation in Foundation stage with no joining letter sets to the teaching of joins throughout each year group.
- Handwriting patterns should be taught in a handwriting lesson and are a pleasurable and creative way of practising handwriting movements.
- 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.
- When required, advice will be requested from Occupational Therapists or other relevant agencies to help with specific individual problems.
- Intervention measures are to be included in Provision plans where relevant i.e. dyspraxia.

Pencil/Pen Grip

Where ever possible the pen or pencil should be gripped comfortably between forefinger and thumb with the second finger below to steady it.

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.

Differentiation

Due to a range of factors, (such as fine motor skills and specific learning needs) some children across school are developing their writing at different speeds. Therefore, some children will take part in a range of activities through adult led and planned continuous provision 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. These interventions will be similar to those accessed by early years children in other settings. Children should also 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. They should be given the

opportunities to develop their handwriting to their full potential within their learning capabilities.

If children aren't ready for the age appropriate work, then they should be working from an earlier book or using the fine motor skills programme '**Write from the Start**' this programme if required, this should be used regularly.

Guidance for Left-handers

At least 10% of the population are left-handed, the majority of whom are boys. 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. 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.

Guidance for Right-handers

Right-handers do not face the same problems as left-handers, but many children will find it helpful to slope the paper slightly and to move it away from the body as the page is completed.

Monitoring and Assessment

The monitoring of the teaching of handwriting is carried out by Class teachers, English (writing) co-ordinator and Assessment co-ordinator in line with the school development plan. Assessment of handwriting is an ongoing 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 which can be used to ensure that children are ready to begin the new year's work. It acts as a baseline assessment. Additionally, the Teacher's Book highlights 'common errors' in the early years so that teachers and TAs are alerted to the possible and most typical errors.

Twinkl Handwriting Aims

Twinkl Handwriting offers a school-side consistent approach with a planned sequence of lessons to help teachers ensure they have progressively covered the skills required to meet

the aims of the National Curriculum for writing transcription and the related Early Learning Goals.

Step 1 (Let's Get Ready to Write) of each Handwriting Help Card, available in every lower case letter pack, aims to help children to develop their fine and gross motor skills and pencil control as a precursor to effective handwriting: to show good control and coordination in large and small movements, to move confidently in a range of ways while safely negotiating space, to handle equipment and tools effectively and to safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques.

Steps 2 and 3 (Forming Letter Families and Positioning) aim to teach children the statutory objectives from the year 1 and year 2 curriculum: to sit correctly at a table, to hold a pencil comfortably and correctly, to begin to form lower case letters in the correct direction and of the correct size relative to one another, to start and finish letters in the right place, to form capital letters and the digits 0-9 of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters, to understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families', to start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and to use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

Steps 4 and 5 (Joining Letters and Fluency, Style & Speed) teach the statutory skills from the year 2 – year 6 curriculum: to use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters; to increase the legibility, fluency, consistency and quality of their handwriting; to ensure that their lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch; to write with increasing speed by choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters and to choose the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

The Twinkl Handwriting scheme intends to take all pupils on a journey to using fluent, speedy and joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. This, in turn, will help to support their composition and spelling.

Implementation

Following the programme allows subject leaders to feel confident about curriculum design and delivery throughout their whole educational setting; this is detailed in the Twinkl Handwriting progression map.

If implemented correctly, the detailed planning and progressive sequence of the programme assures subject quality, sufficient depth and coverage of skills and gives teachers the curriculum expertise to deliver effective writing transcription lessons. The scheme's supporting resources enable effective curriculum implementation and can be differentiated to meet all pupils' learning needs. Where gaps in pupils' skills are identified, the Twinkl Handwriting materials can also be used within intervention sessions to enhance pupils' capacity to access the full curriculum. Each lesson has built-in assessment opportunities, which give reliable snapshots of pupil progress. The scheme also offers more formal assessment materials as well as a handwriting coverage and assessment pack to track progress over the longer term.

Impact

The impact of using the full range of Twinkl Handwriting resources, including display materials, will be seen across the school with an increase in the profile of handwriting. Following the scheme, it allows for a consistent approach where handwriting expectations

are clear and the same technical vocabulary is used with, and spoken by, all teaching staff and learners. Whole school and parental engagement can also be improved through the use of Twinkl Handwriting resources as home learning tasks. (where possible)

Twinkl want handwriting lessons to not feel like a chore for teachers and pupils and to encourage a sense of pride in pupils' written work.

Our children's handwriting will become automatic and to a high standard so that they are able to focus on the content of their writing rather than the presentation.

The impact of the scheme should be noticeable within written work in all areas of the curriculum.

Date of Policy: Autumn 2022

Review Date: July 2023