

# Fairfield Primary School

## Handwriting Policy



### Introduction

This policy outlines how we teach handwriting at Fairfield Primary School.

As a school we recognise handwriting as an important, basic, life skill which should be embedded across the curriculum. It should become an automatic process which allows children to record their thinking fluently and legibly, with confidence and creativity.

In **Early Years (EY)** a firm foundation for handwriting is laid down. Daily opportunities to develop fine and gross motor skills are offered through both indoor and outdoor continuous provision. As well as children been offered daily opportunities to experience 'Funky Fingers'.

In **Reception** print letters are taught daily using a variety of resources. The way the printed letters are formed links to the Letter-Join scheme.

In **Key Stage 1 (KS1)** a more formal handwriting teaching is introduced at this stage; building up to two lessons each week.

Formal handwriting practise continues into the early stages of **Key Stage 2 (KS2)**. By the end of KS2, children should be refining their handwriting skills and be confident in producing letters and words automatically and legibly in independent written work.

## Aims

Our aims in teaching handwriting are to:

- Develop a well-formed, legible and fluent handwriting style and use this with confidence and increasing speed.
- Raise attainment for all children in handwriting through a consistent and progressive approach using the 'Letter-Join Scheme'.
- Model an agreed and consistent handwriting approach across the school when writing on the board or in children's books, so that children experience coherence and continuity.
- Have high expectations for handwriting across the curriculum.
- Promote a positive attitude towards the presentation of handwriting ensuring that children take pride in their work.
- Make provision for left handed children to develop free flowing writing.

## Teaching and Learning

To initiate and develop handwriting skills in the Early Years children are offered a wide range of activities and resources to enhance their fine and gross motor skills such as:

- Threading
- Play dough
- Peg Boards
- Outdoor chalk activities

In Reception, every morning from 8:50 to 9:00, the children are also given the opportunity to participate in a 'Funky Fingers' activity. Visual aids are placed on the table to allow children to take part in these activities either independently or with parental support.

In Reception, the children are also taught how to form printed letters on a daily basis. These letters are taught following the Letters and Sounds teaching sequence. A variety of resources are used to support the teaching of printed letters.

In KS1 the children build upon the printed letter foundation created in the EY and begin to join letters in a continuous cursive style. Also a more formal approach to teaching handwriting is introduced. The children will be taught handwriting explicitly through the Letter-Join Scheme for 2 x 20 minute sessions per week whilst good handwriting practice is reinforced and embedded across the curriculum in every lesson.

Lower KS2 children continue to build upon and make progress in the skills taught in KS1. They continue to follow the Letter-Join Scheme which is also taught explicitly for 2 x 20 minute sessions each week. A consistent approach to handwriting should be evident in all areas of the curriculum and by the end of Year 6 children should have developed a fluent and confident handwriting style.

In Upper KS2 extra handwriting teaching is provided for children who require support with their handwriting to address gaps in their handwriting skills.

### Assessment

Assessment of handwriting and feedback by the class teacher will be immediate in order to have an impact upon the child's learning. This allows the child to act instantly upon feedback given and assess improvement in their own work.

Handwriting is assessed termly using the Ros Wilson writing criteria and this assessment is incorporated into the judgement of their overall writing stage.

### Teaching Approaches

All children are taught to write with a pencil from EY.

Consistently well formed, legible continuous cursive handwriting leads to children gaining their 'Pre-Pen License'. This allows the children to practise using a pen during handwriting lessons. Once the children have shown they can use a pen confidently in these lessons they are awarded a 'Pen License' which allows the child to use their pen in all work areas of the curriculum. This achievement is then celebrated in the achievement assembly termly.

Left handed children are supported where required and further information on how to do this can be found in Appendix 1.

Children who are identified as having difficulties with certain aspects of handwriting will be provided with further support e.g. pencil grips, seating position on the table, slanted writing boards and advice from the SENDCO.

A consistent approach to posture and pencil grip is adopted by all staff:

- Correct seating position is modelled and checked by the teacher.
- Teachers monitor pencil grip, then support and intervention is given where required.
- Hand eye coordination is observed.
- Teachers ensure that the tables and chairs are at the correct height for pupil ages.

Further information on this can be found in Appendix 2.

Instant verbal feedback is given to children when undertaking a handwriting activity to allow them to act upon and address any errors which may impinge upon the development of fluent handwriting and letter formation.

## Monitoring

Handwriting is monitored across the curriculum by the Senior Leadership Team and English Subject Leaders. This is done through work scrutiny, learning walks and writing moderation.

The focus for monitoring of handwriting is:

- Presentation of handwriting.
- Letter formation.
- Spacing
- Evidence of consistent teaching and assessment at each stage and across the school.

- Evidence that a consistent and coherent style is being modelled by staff across the curriculum.

### Parental support

A Letter-Join handwriting support sheet is provided for parents so they can encourage correct letter formation at home. This can be accessed through the school website and will be given to parents during 'Welcome' meetings (see Appendix 3).

### Resources

Letter-Join handwriting Scheme

Letter-Join worksheets

Letter-Join handwriting font

Handwriting books and folders

Blue handwriting pens provided by the school

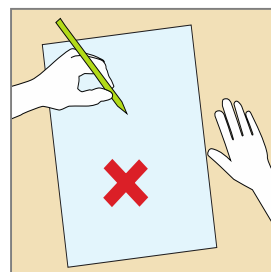
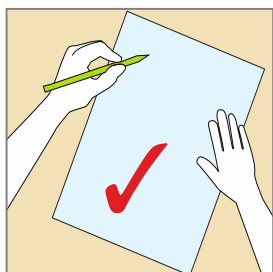
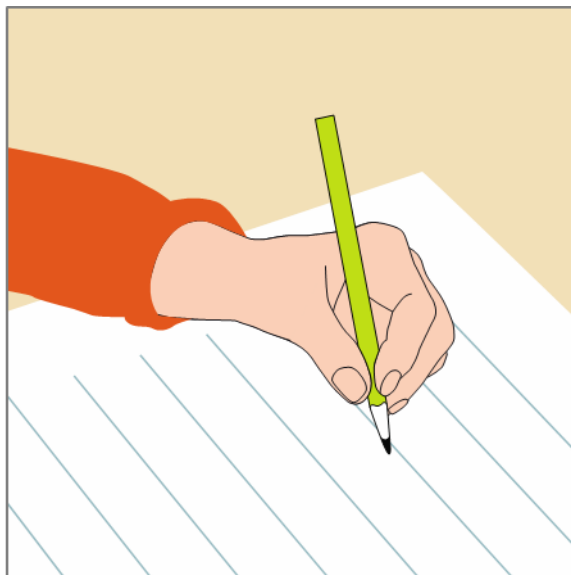
Pencils provided by the school

We discourage the use of roller balls, bios, gel pens and fountain pens.

## APPENDIX I

### LEFT-HANDED CHILDREN

Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow right-handed teachers as they demonstrate letter formation (and vice versa). Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis.



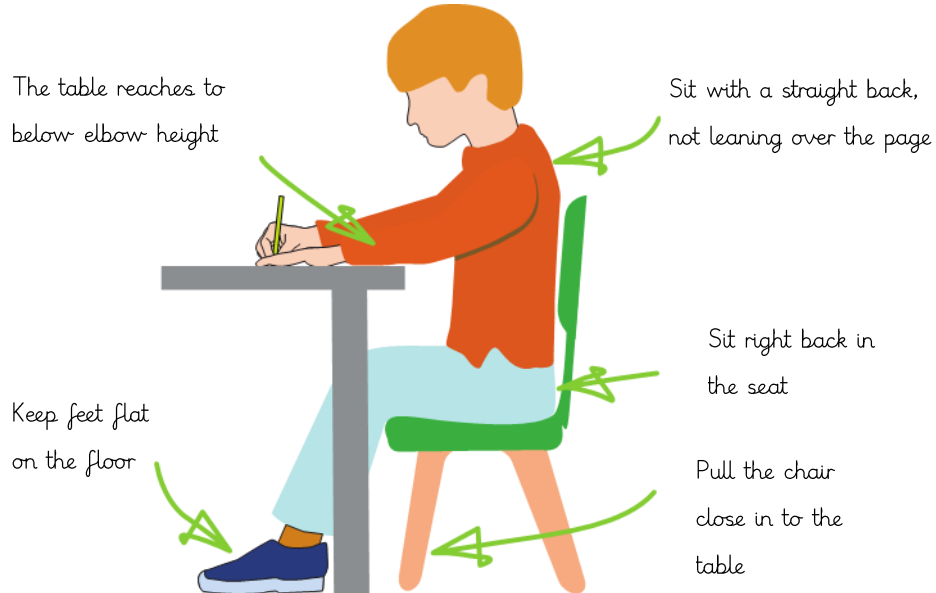
Paper position for left-handed children

- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.
- Pupils should position the paper/book to their left side and slanted, as shown.
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision.
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.

## APPENDIX 2

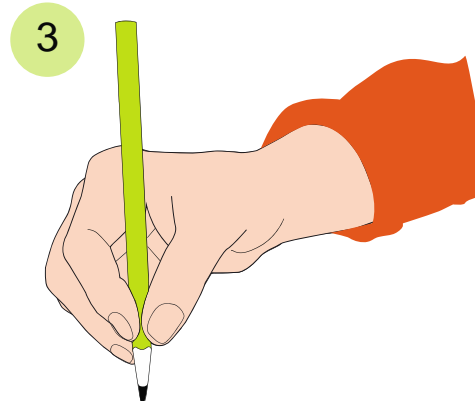
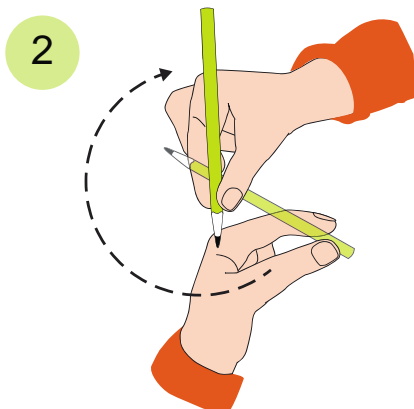
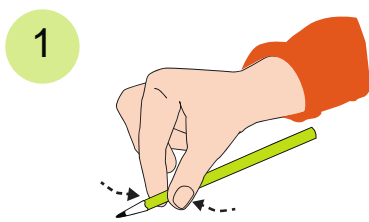
# Correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting

Pupils should be taught to sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.



## THE TRIPOD PENCIL GRIP

Both right and left handed children should be encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows the pen/pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pen/pencil nib.



- 1) Grip the pencil with your index finger and thumb with the nib pointing away.
- 2) With your free hand, spin the pencil from underneath.
- 3) Use your middle finger to support the underside of the pencil.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj

Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss

Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

The quick brown fox jumps

over the lazy dog.