

# Handwriting Policy

The William Hogarth School



Approved by:

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July 2021

Next review due by:

July 2023

## HANDWRITING POLICY

Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. The school recognises that children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. Cursive handwriting teaches pupils to join letters and words as a series of flowing movements and patterns. Handwriting skills will be taught regularly and systematically.

### Aims

It is our aim to encourage children to develop their handwriting skills by developing one consistent style throughout their time at William Hogarth. We recognise that as children become more confident in handwriting, they will in later years develop their own style based on the range of scripts as seen in the wider environment.

Pupils will:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in accordance with the cursive font
- Develop flow and speed
- Eventually produce the letters automatically and in their independent writing
- Pupils will not see handwriting as a distinct and standalone activity but part of their writing experiences.

In order to achieve these aims, the school has adopted a handwriting scheme, *Penpals*, which identifies in every year group, what is expected and how teachers will support pupils in developing their handwriting. This handwriting scheme is recognised by the National Handwriting Association.

The handwriting scheme used by the school closely aligns with the Read, Write Inc programme used to teach phonics. Every opportunity will be taken to develop pupils' spelling whilst developing their handwriting as it is recognised that forming letters by hand while learning sounds, activates reading circuits in the brain that promote literacy.

We will ensure that consistently throughout the school, the following principles will apply:

### Teaching and Learning, children will:

- Experience coherence and continuity in the handwriting approach used by teachers across the school
- Develop a recognition and appreciation of pattern and line
- Be supported in finding the correct grip and so that they do not develop poor control, including the use of pencil grips in the short term to develop confidence
- Understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly
- Encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work and have a sense of enjoyment and achievement in their handwriting
- Be supported in developing correct spelling quickly through a multi-sensory approach to handwriting
- Be shown how to be able to write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes
- Be encouraged to not see handwriting as a barrier to expressing themselves creatively
- Be reminded of the school's presentation policy, which closely aligns with the Handwriting Policy. This includes the aim for all pupils in KS2 to be awarded a 'pen licence' to encourage pride in presenting their work to the highest standard.

## **The progression of handwriting skills:**

Whilst we recognise that children will develop their confidence in handwriting at different stages, we have set out our minimum expectations, by the end of each year group.

Appendix A below provides details of the importance of posture in developing handwriting skills.

### ***Early Years***

Children take part in activities:

- Develop their large and fine motor-skills, recognition of patterns and basic letter movements.
- Form shapes of un-joined letters with exit flicks.
- Children begin to learn how to correctly hold a pencil.

### ***Key Stage 1***

Children will continue to develop fine and gross motor-skills with a range of multi-sensory activities.

Year 1

- Revise the group of letters learnt in Early Years.
- Different diagonal and horizontal joins.
- Children should now be leaving spaces between words accurately.
- Write words with only 2 letters joined frequently.

Year 2

- The break letters (j g x y z b f p q r s).
- Learn further pairs of joined letters, including joins from f s q.

### ***Key Stage 2***

Year 3.

- Revision of particular joins, often used in suffixes,
- Maintain regular sizing and increasing speed.

Year 4

- Children continue to concentrate on particular letter combinations and aspects of good writing e.g. keeping a regular slope.
- Additional layout techniques for note-taking, drafting, print alphabet for labels, posters etc.
- Mid-year children are encouraged to write a forward slope.

Year 5 and 6

- Children are encouraged to make decisions about their own writing e.g. whether to use looped descenders and alternative ways of making some joins.
- Children will concentrate on writing for particular purposes by working on small projects e.g. writing haiku.

Year group expectations and exemplars are shared to ensure consistency and effective progression in the school. The following are examples of the school's expectations:

## Provision for left-handed children

At least 10% of the population are left-handed, the majority of whom are boys. All teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision, including the following guidance:

- 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.

## Capital letters

Capital letters stand alone and are not joined to the next letter. Children must practise starting sentences and writing names using a capital letter and not joining the subsequent letter. This will be modelled by the teacher during English and phonics lessons in particular however, pupils will be reminded in all writing opportunities to adhere to this.

## The Role of Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers are made aware of our agreed handwriting style and are encouraged to practise this with their children at home.

## Resources

The *Penpal* Handwriting scheme consists of practice books for each year group and PowerPoints for teachers to use. To support letter formation and size, pupils will practise handwriting in appropriately lined books. However, pupils will be expected to transfer these skills when using standard lined exercise books. For those pupils who require additional support, the school will provide short term targeted intervention, pencil grips and other relevant resources.

## Terminology

**Cursive:** Joined-up handwriting style

**Capital and lowercase:** The names of capital and lowercase letters (rather than 'big and small').

**Ascenders and Descenders:** Letters that go above the usual letter line and below the base line

**Letter bodies:** The main body of letters, which are neither ascenders or descenders (e.g. the rounded parts of 'b', 'd' and 'a' and the arches of 'm' and 'n')

**Entry and exit strokes:** Entry stroke starts on the line and exit strokes generally end on the line (with the exception of 'o', 'v', 'w', 'r' and 'x')

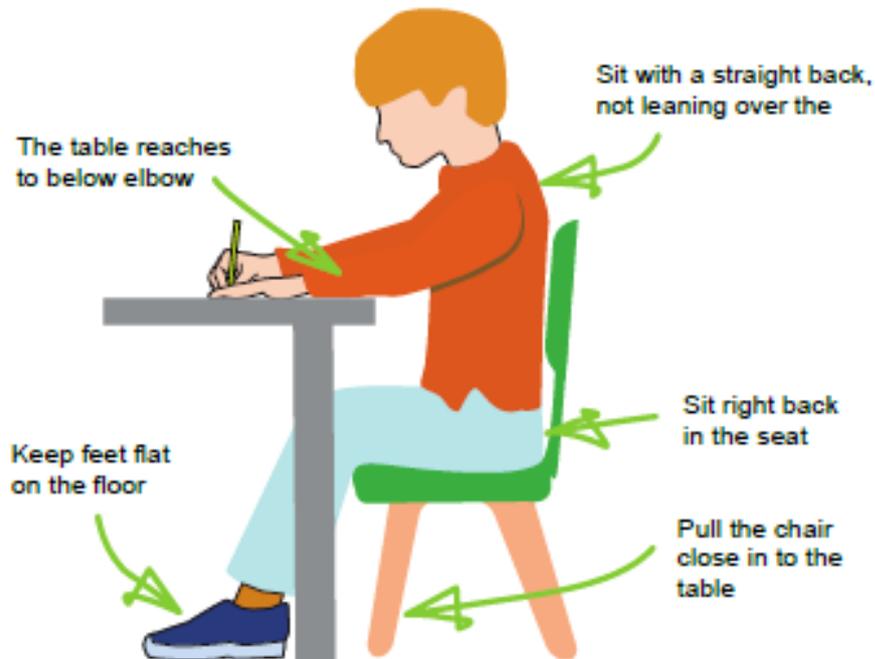
## Assessment of writing

Writing is assessed as part of the English Curriculum. These include an evaluation of letter formation and joining, letter shape, letter size, slant/slope, alignment, spacing and orientation. Teachers will also observe posture, pen grip, paper position, pressure and fluency and speed in assessing pupils' confidence in handwriting.

## Appendix A: Correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting

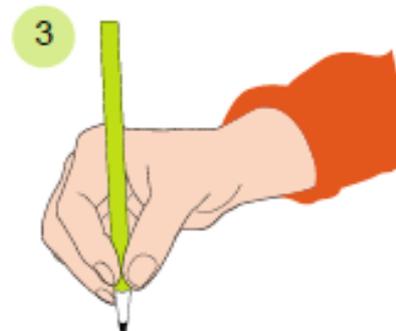
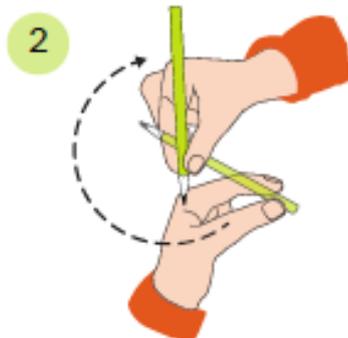
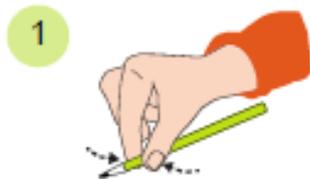
Pupils should be taught to sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.

### SITTING POSITION



### 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.