



# HANDWRITING POLICY

## **INTRODUCTION**

The policy is underpinned by all four of the Academy's core values:

**serve learn love challenge**

Time devoted to the teaching and learning of letter formation in the early years will pay off. Legible writing that can be produced comfortably, at speed and with little conscious effort allows a child to attend to the higher-level aspects of writing composition and content. . . Without fast and legible handwriting, students may miss out on learning opportunities and under-achieve academically.

*National Handwriting Association*

## **AIMS**

Rothwell C of E Primary Academy aims through the teaching of handwriting are that the pupils will:

- experience coherence and continuity in learning and teaching across our Academy;
- understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly;
- take pride in the presentation of their work, studying handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement;
- be supported in developing correct spelling quickly through a multi-sensory approach to handwriting;
- be able to write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.
- develop a fluent, joined handwriting style by the end of Year Two.

## **TEACHING & LEARNING**

We teach handwriting as a specific skill rather than as an independent task (as this can often reinforce poor formation). Little and often is the most successful way – an initial modelled session followed by several shorter sessions to provide additional practise is favoured.

### **Basic structure of a handwriting session**

-relaxation,

-Posture check, feet flat on the floor, back touching the chair (page 160 Developing Early Writing)

-Teacher modelling

-Children practising independently with teacher model, then from memory

Sessions should be fun, varied and multi-sensory: write letters in the air (sky writing pg 156 Developing Early Writing), on hands, orally describe letter shapes and joins with children 'the patter';

### **A model of the agreed handwriting style should be displayed in all classrooms**

Teachers aim to make handwriting lessons **relevant to the curriculum**, by providing a purpose to the work where possible, encouraging the children to view handwriting as part of an overall presentation policy.

### **Posture**

The 90-90-90 seating posture will be promoted as the most ideal position for seated work. This position ensures that the child's ankles, knees, and hips are all aligned at 90 degrees. To provide further support, the child's feet should be planted firmly on the floor, the trunk should be aligned against the back of the chair, the head should be aligned with the trunk, and the shoulders and wrists should be stabilised.

The child's elbows should be slightly off the edge of the desk.

## Paper

As motor skills increase then the size of writing should decrease. Children should start writing in A4 plain books or on sentence strips then as their handwriting improves lined exercise books should be introduced.

## Assessment and Targets

Termly assessment will take place in Years 1-6 with children writing from a dictation as well as a near copying exercise (see appendix c). This assessment will be recorded in the children's superbooks. A sample from each child may be displayed to show individual expectations of daily handwriting standards. Handwriting targets will go home to parents a minimum of two times a year.

## Handwriting Scheme

At Rothwell C of E Primary Academy we follow a cursive Handwriting Scheme with the following letter formation:

### Lower case letters

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

### Capitals

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

### Numbers

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

### The Four Joins

1. to letters without ascenders
2. to letters with ascenders
3. horizontal joins
4. horizontal joins to letters with ascenders

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

**The only break letter** (letters that aren't joined **from**) is x.

NB children must be taught individual letters first so that they see them as individual units **before** learning to join.

## **INCLUSION**

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and provision will be made for this in Individual Education Plans [I.E.P.'s]. 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. This may involve extra handwriting sessions and access to extra resources. Other areas that could be considered are posture, lighting, angle of table etc. Outside agencies can be contacted where appropriate.

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.
- **Developing Early Writing** page 161 has further guidance

Teachers are alert to 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.

## **THE ROLE OF PARENTS / CARERS**

Parents and carers are introduced to the school's handwriting style through a leaflet. The Foundation Stage staff play an important role in communicating this at an early stage, to ensure that parents are informed and encouraged to offer good models to their children by using only capital letters for the beginning of their names.

All members of staff (including teaching assistants, supply teachers, and students) are provided with appropriate handwriting models [included in staff/student and supply staff handbooks] and are expected to promote the agreed handwriting style by their own example.

## **THE CONTRIBUTION OF HANDWRITING TO OTHER ASPECTS OF THE CURRICULUM**

The growth in the use of word processing and desktop publishing has increased pupils' awareness of the importance of presentation and the variety of handwriting styles/fonts available. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate a range of fonts and to select whatever is appropriate to suit particular purposes.

Teachers discuss handwriting and presentation in all subjects and aim to model good handwriting themselves. Teachers are **explicit** about different types of handwriting for example, personal note-taking or best handwriting for presentation, but remember not all the children will be able to achieve this in Key Stage one. Teachers give handwriting a high priority in classroom displays. ***The use of rubbers is discouraged. Mistakes are indicated by marking through with one neat horizontal line.***

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

We ensure that each individual child receives an equal learning experience regardless of ability, culture and gender.

## Appendix A

### 2014 National Curriculum

#### Foundation Stage (4-5 years old)

##### Early Learning Goal – Writing

Children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

Typical behaviours that relate to handwriting for this learning goal:

- Uses some clearly identifiable letters to communicate meaning, representing some sounds correctly and in sequence
- Write own name and other things such as labels and captions
- Attempt to write short sentences in meaningful context

Core learning skills for handwriting:

- Use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are formed correctly.

‘Early years outcomes’; September 2013; Department of Education.

‘Statutory framework for early years foundation stage’ March 2014, effective September 2014; Department for Education.

#### Principles

- Learning letter formation alongside phonics
- Learn letter formation using ‘shape families: **long ladder** letters l i j t u y  
**one-armed robot** letters r b h k m n p  
**curly caterpillar** letters c a d e g o q f s  
**zigzag** letters z, v, w, x,

Once basic letter formation is mastered, children are provided with large pieces of paper (turned landscape) with a single line.

### Year 1

#### Statutory Requirements - Handwriting

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.

#### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the writing implement (pencil, pen) should not be too large for a young pupil's hand. Whatever is being used should allow the pupil to hold it easily and correctly so that bad habits are avoided.

Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs.

### Year 2

#### Statutory Requirements – Handwriting

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.

#### Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

Pupils should revise and **practise correct letter formation frequently**. They should be taught to write with a **joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation**.

### Lower KS2 (Year 3 & 4)

<p>Statutory Requirements</p> <p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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</li><li>• Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting [for example, by ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch].</li></ul>	<p>Notes and guidance (non-statutory)</p> <p>Pupils should be <b>joining handwriting throughout their independent writing</b>. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of <b>increasing the fluency</b> with which pupils are able to write what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling.</p>
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### Upper KS2 (Year 5 & 6)

<p>Statutory Requirements</p> <p>Pupils should be taught to:</p> <p>Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters</li><li>• Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.</li></ul>	<p>Notes and guidance (non-statutory)</p> <p>Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the <b>speed</b> of it, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say. They should be <b>clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task</b>, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version. They should also be taught to use an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form.</p>
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'English programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2 National curriculum in England'; September 2013' (updated for implementation September 2014); Department for Education

## Appendix B

Activities and exercises to develop Gross Motor Control:

*Gross Motor Control* is the term used to describe the development of controlled movements of the whole body, or limbs such as the legs or arms. Of particular importance in relation to handwriting is the development of good posture and balance. Activities such as:

- Dancing and skipping
- Running and jumping to music
- Use of small apparatus e.g. throwing, rolling, catching, kicking and bouncing balls
- Cycling
- Gripping climbing frames
- Building with large-scale construction kits
- Hammering
- Consolidate vocabulary of movement by talking about movements such as, *going round and round, making curves, springing up and sliding down, making long, slow movements or quick, jumpy movements*
- Make large movements in the air with arms, hands and shoulders with dance ribbons, use music

Any activities described in the **Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage** under Physical Development

*Fine Motor Control* is the term used to describe smaller movements, usually of the hand and fingers (or of the feet and toes).

Activities and exercises to develop Fine Motor Control:

- Folding paper
- Cutting out shapes from paper and card
- Fitting things into frames like geometric shapes
- Model making
- Building and stacking bricks
- Screw toys and wood working tools
- Pegboards
- Modelling with malleable materials like Playdoh, plasticene and clay
- Drawing in sand and sand and water play in general, including sieving, pouring and picking up toys using tools e.g. fishing rods and cranes
- Sewing and weaving
- Chopping and peeling when cooking
- Develop the pincer movement by using tweezers to pick up sequins, beads and feathers, sprinkling glitter, sand and salt
- Scribbling and drawing with chalk, dry wipe pens, felt tip pens and paints on small, large boards and easels and on small and large paper
- Playing with tactile and magnetic letters
- Puzzles
- Games and miming involving finger and wrist movement e.g. finger puppets
- Use increasingly finer tools to make patterns of lines.



## Appendix C

Dictation assessment (year 2+)

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

Copying of a near text assessment.

Reception

quack

zebra

how

Year 1

Here comes dad with four ice creams.

Year 2

There are many ways we can get exercise. When we can, we should walk or ride our bikes.

Year 3

Pretty soon Nick will be crawling and getting into everything. Many things in the house are not safe. Can you help me find these things so I can put them where Nick can't get them?

Year 4

On that cold November day, something caught my eye. It was a lively little ball of fluff, hopping from twig to twig in a leafless hedge. I forgot about the cold as I watched the agile little bird with the black cap and white cheeks. I don't know why, but from that moment I was hooked.

Year 5

Alyssa likes to be creative by editing her films. This is when she puts the scenes together to tell her story. She uses a computer software program to edit her films. By using this program, Alyssa has the ability to shorten scenes. She can also fix mistakes and change the order of the scenes.

Year 6

Drag is the force that works against the direction of flight of anything that is flying through the air. The amount of drag can be affected by shape. Fat, lumpy shapes with sharp edges create a lot of drag. They disturb the air and make it swirl about as they move along. Sleek, streamlined shapes have low drag and hardly disturb the air as they cut smoothly through it, so they fly fastest of all.