



Handwriting and Presentation Policy

Statement of Intent

At Stowlawn Primary School we are committed to providing a safe and secure learning environment that is friendly, nurturing, inspiring and supportive for all learners.

Introduction

Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. If they have difficulty, this will limit fluency and inhibit the quality and quantity of their work. It is important that the child's handwriting becomes a skill that requires little effort and thought, so that creative and physical energy can be focused on the content of writing, rather than upon the act. We adhere to The British Dyslexia Association's recommendation that children learn the continuous cursive style. The key advantages are:

- By making each letter in one movement, children's hands develop a 'physical memory' of it, making it easier to produce the correct shape
- Because letters and words flow from left to right, children are less likely to reverse letters which are typically difficult (like b/d or p/q)
- There is a clearer distinction between capital letters and lower case.
- The continuous flow of writing ultimately improves speed and spelling

Aims

We aim for children to:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting
- Develop flow and speed to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes
- To automatically use clearly formed and joined handwriting in all of their writing
- Use their skills with confidence, in real life situations

Teaching and Learning

In order to achieve these aims, the following principles are followed:

- Patterns relating to letter formations are first introduced using a variety of tools and multi-sensory methods. This develops free flowing hand movements and muscle strength. Letters are also introduced in varied, multi-sensory sessions: writing letters in the air, on backs or hands; orally describing letter shapes and joins with children using 'letter speak'; using a variety of writing materials including whiteboards, chalk, paints, felt pens, crayons, plasticine, cornflour mix, shaving foam etc.

- The cursive font, with lead-ins, is taught as a specific skill, each day for around 10 minutes, with additional, individual or group practise where necessary.
- Correct pencil hold and letter formation are taught from the beginning and handwriting is frequently linked with spelling.
- When marking or writing comments, members of staff use cursive handwriting as appropriate.
- Teachers model cursive script on IWB, whiteboards, flip charts etc.
- Displays around the school and classroom should model clear joined handwriting as well as other fonts.
- The cursive font should be displayed in classrooms to aid familiarity with the style.

Handwriting Progression

Reception children are to take part in activities that develop fine and gross motor skills. The children are introduced to the cursive script and practise correct formation.

Reception	<p>Children are to take part in activities that develop fine and gross motor skills.</p> <p>The children are introduced to the pre-cursive script and may practise correct formation, however, there is not an expectation for them to routinely use pre-cursive script, as focus should remain on accurate letter formation and recognition without additional markings that may cause unnecessary confusion.</p>
Year 1	<p>Children should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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. <p>The cursive script has a lead in and exit line that naturally encourages the children to join their handwriting. The children are to begin to join when they are ready.</p>
Year 2	<p>Children should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Form lower case letters of the correct size relative to one another• 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 <p>If they have not already done so, children should begin to join their handwriting and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined.</p> <p>If and when the children are producing consistently formed, sized and joined handwriting, they may be granted a ‘pen license’ and encouraged to write in pen where appropriate. This will be at the discretion of the teacher.</p>

Year 3 and Year 4	<p>Children should be taught to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting e.g. ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant and that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch <p>When the children are producing consistently formed, sized and joined handwriting, they should be granted a 'pen license' and encouraged to write in pen where appropriate. This will be at the discretion of the teacher.</p>
Year 5 and Year 6	<p>Children should be taught to write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters • Choosing the right implement that is best suited for a task

Suggested techniques for teaching letter formation and joins

- Always model good handwriting
- Demonstrate formations
- Talk through the process
- Encourage children to verbalise the process
- Children form letters in the air, on parts of the body and on whiteboards
- Finger trace over tactile letters
- Write in sand with finger or a stick

Basic structure of a handwriting session:

- Posture check: feet flat on the floor, back straight and touching the chair
- Teacher modelling
- Children practising independently with a teacher model, then from memory, where appropriate

Provision for left-handed children

Left-handed children always sit on the left side of right-handed children, so their elbows don't bump and knock each other. They are encouraged to find a comfortable orientation for their paper, usually slightly to

the left centre of their body, and to have their fingers about 1.5cm from the point of their pencil. Pens appropriate for left-handed writers will be provided, to avoid smudging.

Resources and writing materials

Children are given experience of a variety of writing tools. Handwriting pens (not biros) should be awarded to those who have achieved a consistent, cursive style. All children should write in black ink. The children are to practise their handwriting in their literacy book.

Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities

The SENCO will provide resources for those who have difficulty with fine motor skills – pencil grips, fine motor control programmes and referrals, where necessary.

Presentation in KS1 and KS2

Pupils will learn that different levels of presentation are appropriate for different pieces of work and different circumstances. However, pupils are expected to:

- Use pencils, unless a teacher decides to award a handwriting pen (see page 7)
- Ensure pencils are sharpened for all lessons to aid a neat and fluent style
- Look after exercise books and not draw or scribble in or on them
- Increasingly plan their work to make it look attractive and well presented
- Not use writing or drawing media that is not approved or not fit for purpose
- Use rulers to draw straight lines
- Set out, number and annotate work appropriately and as directed by the class teacher
- At appropriate times, pupils may be encouraged to experiment with alternative means of presenting their work for specific reasons, again, at the direction of the class teacher.
- Cross through mistakes or editing alterations with a single line, with a pen or pencil, whichever is being used. Erasers should only be used very occasionally and with the permission of a teacher.

Maths Specific Presentation

- Short dates are to be used, for example: 10.02.2021
- A ruled margin down the left side of the page of 2 or 3 squares, dependent on square size
- All dates and L.O.s are to be underlined neatly using a ruler
- To use DUMTUMS model for structure – **Date. Underline. Miss a line. Title/L.O. Underline. Miss a line.**
Start my work.
- The large equals sign in formal calculations should also be written with a ruler
- Written work should utilise the 'one digit, one square' model, where possible
- There may be occasions, particularly in KS1, where children are provided with a pre-printed date and L.O. for sticking in their book, or these will feature on a pre-printed worksheet. However, worksheets must be used in moderation

Literacy and Wider Curriculum

- A long date is to be used, when the teacher requires the child to write it, for example: Thursday 12th December
- All dates and L.O.s are to be underlined neatly using a ruler
- To use DUMTUMS model for structure – **D**ate. **U**nderline. **M**iss a line. **T**itle/L.O. **U**nderline. **M**iss a line. **S**tart my work.
- There may be occasions, particularly in KS1, where children are provided with a pre-printed date and L.O. for sticking in their book, or these will feature on a pre-printed worksheet. However, worksheets must be used in moderation – children should be encouraged to write their date and L.O. when they can

Handwriting Licences and Pens

At Stowlawn Primary School, when a child, irrespective of year group, can demonstrate a fluent, cursive and neat handwriting style, the class teacher may decide to award that child their handwriting pen licence. The child will be given their own handwriting pen and licence card to acknowledge this achievement. Children will then be allowed to use their handwriting pen for any written work – pencils must still be used for diagrams and drawing.

The teacher must judge the child's proficiency with a handwriting pen and make the judgement to award one, if they see fit. Pencils are far easier to correct mistakes and will enable children to practise their handwriting before being awarded a handwriting pen. If a child's handwriting deteriorates, the teacher may decide to ask the child to begin using a pencil again, in the short term, to allow them to improve to the previously agreed standard.

Example licence:



Teachers are expected to:

- Ensure that classrooms are well equipped with the essential tools that will assist pupils to create work with a high presentational standard
- Organise the classroom in such a way that materials and resources are easily accessible and systems for their return and maintenance are robust (self- service classroom)

- Ensure that children look after resources and materials so that they learn to respect equipment and good value for money is assured.

Policy Success Criteria

We know Stowlawn Primary School's Handwriting and Presentation Policy is effective if:

- A scrutiny of work confirms the appropriate development in handwriting skills
- Specific difficulties are addressed in the marking of handwriting tasks
- A scrutiny of work confirms that this presentation policy is adhered to