

Handwriting Policy

2023

At Banks Road Infant and Nursery School we believe that neat, well-formed handwriting and presentation of written work helps to raise standards as the pupils take pride in and have a sense of ownership of their work.



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Banks Road Infant and Nursery School

Handwriting

Background

Why is a handwriting policy important for a school?

Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Given effective teaching, handwriting can be mastered by most pupils by the time they are seven or eight years old enabling them, with practice, to go on to develop a faster and more mature hand ready for secondary school and adult life. The surest way to ensure consistent teaching and the development of legible, fluent joined handwriting throughout the school is to have a written policy agreed and put into practice by all staff.

Handwriting is a movement skill, children need to practise handwriting movements correctly and often. The first handwriting lessons are vital and the most important issue is to ensure that the children we teach learn to form the letters of the alphabet with the correct sequence of strokes from the beginning. The correct formation of all letters needs to become quite automatic and may require a lot of practice.

Suzanne Tiburtius of the National Handwriting Association

Aims:

- ☺ To raise standards in writing across the school.
- ☺ To have a consistent approach across both Key Stages when teaching handwriting and presentation of work throughout the school.
- ☺ To adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays / resources.

For pupils to:

- ☺ Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting by the end of Year 2.
- ☺ Develop flow and speed, so that eventually they are able to produce the letters automatically and in their independent writing.

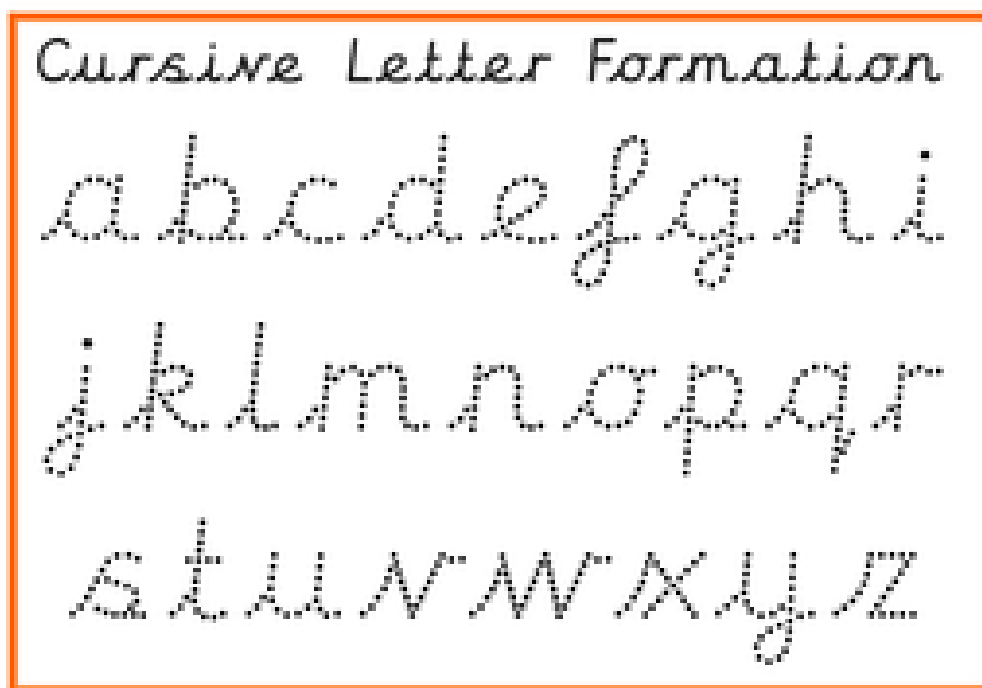
Teaching and Learning

- As recommended by the British Dyslexia Association, we work towards a continuous cursive style of writing.
- Teachers and Teaching Assistants model the agreed style when modelling writing both in class, on displays and in feedback in books.
- Before developing a cursive style we ensure Reception and Year 1 children can form individual letters correctly. See below.

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- Our agreed cursive style for Year 2 is as below:



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Entitlement and curriculum provision

Handwriting is taught regularly through short, focused sessions and may be linked with spelling, grammar or phonics objectives. Teaching generally occurs outside English lessons, although shared and guided writing also provides additional opportunities for the modelling and monitoring of handwriting.

Teaching and Learning

Handwriting is a skill which needs to be taught explicitly. Since handwriting is essentially a movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed style by the teacher is very important; it is not sufficient to require pupils to only copy models from a published scheme or worksheet.

Consistency in the attitudes displayed, the methods employed and the models provided is the key to effective learning. A mixture of whole class, small group and individual teaching is planned.

The role of the teacher:

- To follow the school policy to help each child develop legible and fluent handwriting.
- To provide direct teaching and accurate modelling.
- To provide resources and an environment which promotes good handwriting.
- To observe pupils, monitor progress and determine targets for development.

General

- Display writing throughout the school includes block letters, cursive writing and computer generated writing.
- When marking or writing comments, members of staff use handwriting appropriate to the year group.
- Children are given experience of a variety of writing tools. Handwriting pens are introduced in key stage 1 when teachers feel it is appropriate.

Early years, reception and key Stage 1

Children will start practising their handwriting using the ‘Floppy Phonics’ guide as above. Handwriting is taught as a discrete subject. Children use lined paper / books.

The children are taught to:

- Develop their fine and gross motor skills with a range of multi-sensory activities

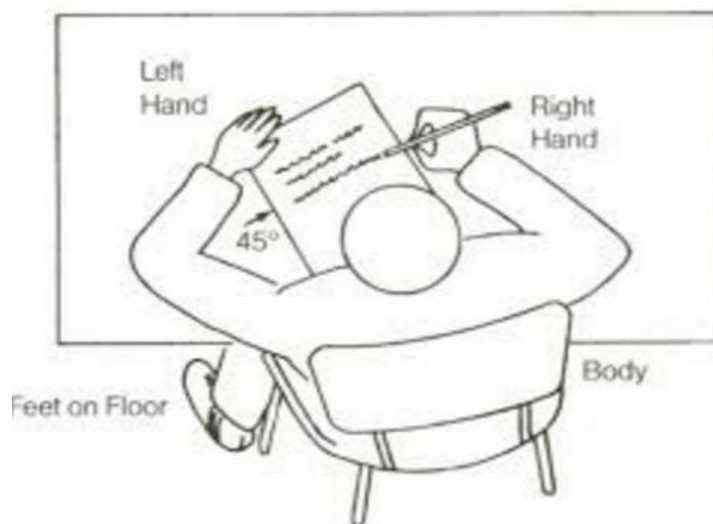
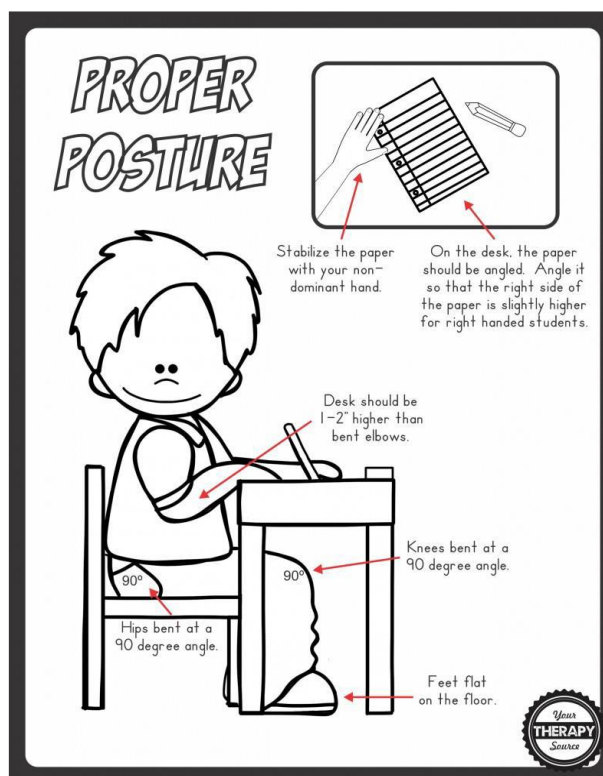
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- Practise patterns and free flowing hand motions
- Write both lower case and upper case letters
- Write from left to right and from top to bottom
- Start and finish letters correctly
- Be consistent with the size and shape of letters and the spacing of letters and words
- Sit letters on the line, and ensure that ascenders reach the appropriate height, and that descenders sit below the line
- Have the correct pencil grip
- Find a convenient position for their page
- Have the correct posture and position
- Within KS1, every class will have at least four handwriting sessions per week
- The vast majority/all of children leaving year 1, should be able to correctly write every lower case letter, form capital letters and form all of their numbers correctly
- Children from year 2 should be taught to join in cursive style.
- Children in reception should have lines that are consistent across the year group. This will ensure children's letter size are appropriate and not too big

Posture

- Chairs and desks within classrooms are matched to children's age and height.
- Children's backs should be straight and feet resting on the floor. A right-handed child should have their book slanted to the left. For a left-handed child the book should be slanted to the right.
- Always make sure that the hand which is not holding the pencil or pen holds the paper.

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Handwriting grip

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Tripod Grip



Quadropod Grip

Left handed pupils

- Teachers should be 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 – avoiding elbows knocking.
- Left handed pupils should be encouraged to bring their hands down and round so a hooked, claw like style doesn't develop.
- Extra practise with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.
- Letters which have a cross-stroke such as T, t and f will be formed slightly differently
- Teachers are alert to the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when they are modelled by a right-handed teacher.
- Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat

Planning

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- During handwriting sessions, children will apply taught formations to letters, words or parts of text relevant to their current learning. For example, they may practise the letters from their current phonics focus, the letter strings used in their weekly spellings, key vocabulary related to core texts etc.
- Books will be used as evidence for the progression of handwriting.

Homework

- Pencils/pens should be used in homework books and children are encouraged to use the appropriate script in all written home learning.

Implements

- Children use a standard HB pencil, **well sharpened**

Continuity and Progression

Foundation Stage

Good handwriting relies on secure motor control and hand-eye coordination. Children in the Foundation Stage should learn handwriting through movement with the actual writing of letters as the ultimate aim. Children will:

- Engage in activities requiring hand-eye coordination
- Use one-handed tools and equipment
- Draw lines and circles using gross motor movement
- Manipulate objects with increasing control
- Begin to use anticlockwise movement and retrace vertical lines
- Begin to form recognisable letters
- Use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed

Throughout the Foundation Stage, children need lots of opportunities to develop:

- Physical control through large-scale movement such as outdoor play. Balancing, climbing, marching and moving to music.
- Manipulative skills such as using tools, cooking utensils and scissors.
- Fine motor control and hand-eye coordination, through activities such as jigsaws, threading, cutting and manipulating ‘small world’ equipment.

The key movements underpinning letter formation should be introduced through large-scale movements, from the shoulder.

In the earliest stages children should make the movements symmetrically using both arms. Once the movement is firmly established in kinaesthetic memory, it can be reduced in scale using activities such as sky writing, using sticks in sand etc. and then reduced further in art activities using felt tip pens, crayons and chubby pencils.

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Reception

Pre-writing stage- patterning
Individual letter formation
Word formation based on letter groups

Key Stage 1

The National Curriculum English Programmes of Study provide guidance on teaching handwriting:

Year 1 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
- Make links with phonics and spelling

Year 2 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 not joined
- 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

Presentation guidance

It is essential that all children should have pride in their work and that it is set out well.

- Children should write from the left side to the edge of the page.
- Teacher's comments will indicate whether a correction needs to be addressed.
- Children will generally begin new work on a new page as appropriate for ability.
- Children will be encouraged to draw a single line through a mistake.
- Rubbers will be used within reason to correct pencil work.
- Criteria for presentation of work will be discussed prior to commencement of work.

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- Pictures should be coloured in pencil crayons or plastic crayons. Felt pens should not be used in exercise books.
- When squared paper is used for Maths 1 digit is written in each box and a line is left between each sum.
- In Maths an eraser can be used at the teacher’s discretion.

Inclusion

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and a specific individual or group programme is drawn up in consultation with the SEN co-ordinator. Thicker triangular pencils, pencil grips and wider lines will be used by children experiencing problems writing alongside other activities to develop their fine motor skills.

The learning environment

A dedicated writing area is established in Foundation Stage classrooms. Writing areas/boxes are equipped with a range of writing implements and materials. Throughout all Key stages teachers display **both** handwritten and word processed work to give a high profile to developing a neat, legible and sometimes cursive style.

The role of parents and carers

The Foundation Stage teachers play an important role in communicating how children develop good handwriting practice at an early stage, for example, 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, practising drawing patterns together, playing joining up games which encourage left to right directionality. The Foundation Stage teachers, in partnership with the English subject leader, are expected to communicate with pre-school agencies to encourage good practice.

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

Monitoring and Evaluation

- This will be undertaken by the class teacher and will also be assessed as part of each term’s English writing assessments.
- When undertaking scrutiny we will monitor all subjects for neat presentation and the use of cursive writing.

<u>THIS POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED ANNUALLY.</u>
DATE OF REVIEW BY GOVERNING BODY: March 2023

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This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Full governing board March 2023.

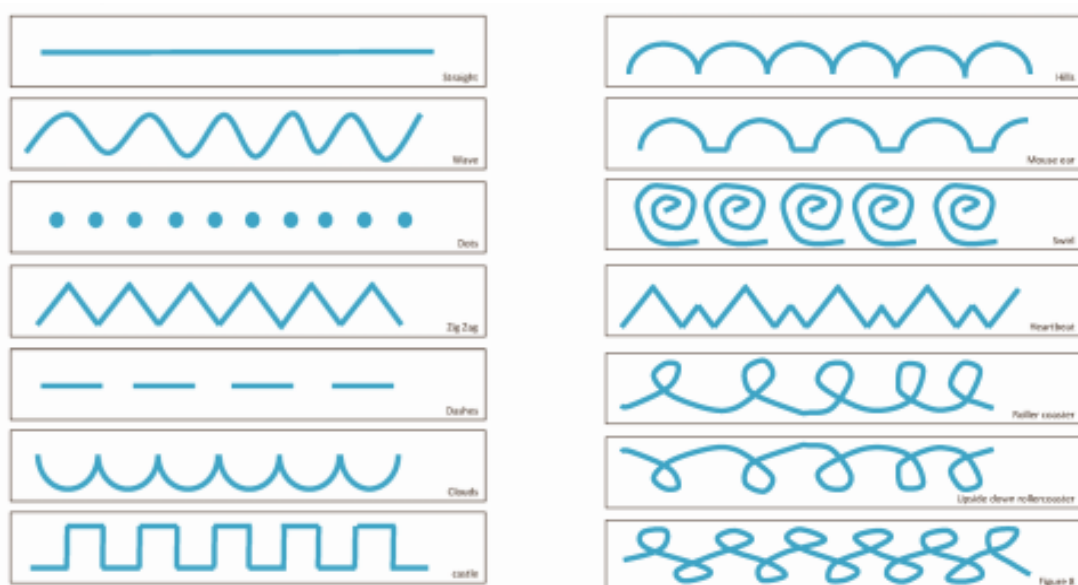
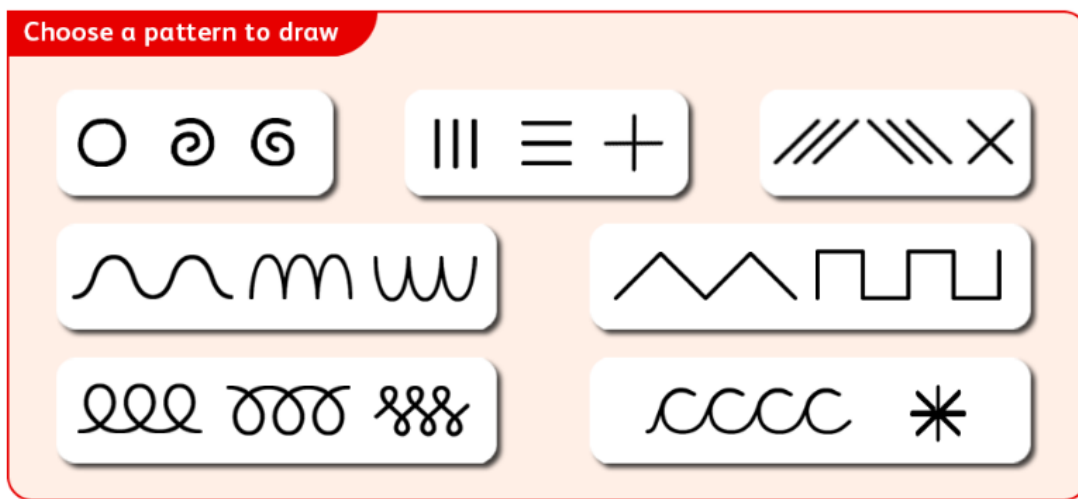
Signed: Chair of Governors _____

Date: _____

Appendix 1:

Fluency Patterns

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Appendix 2:

Individual letter formation

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