

Handwriting Policy

January 2025

Bushmead Primary School



Contents

1.	Aims	1
2.	Legislation and guidance	1
3.	Definitions	1
4.	Roles and responsibilities	1
5.	Teaching aims	1
6.	Adaptive Teaching	2
7.	National Curriculum	2
8.	Recommended timings	3
9.	Common Approaches	3
10.	Pencil \Pen grip	4
11.	Posture	4
12.	Monitoring arrangements	4
13.	Link with other policies and documents	4

1. Aims

This policy is to outline how we teach 'Handwriting' at Bushmead Primary School.

As a school, we recognise that handwriting is an important skill and children's ability to write fluently for the rest of their lives depends on a good foundation of taught handwriting in the early years of their education.

2. Legislation and guidance

"Handwriting is a tool that has to work. It must be comfortable, fast and legible."

(Angela Webb, Chair, National Handwriting Association)

3. Definitions

Handwriting is writing done by hand with a pen, pencil, digital stylus, or another instrument. The art, skill, or manner of handwriting is called penmanship.

Handwriting in which successive letters are joined is called cursive script. Handwriting in which the letters are separated (as block letters) is called manuscript style or printing.

Decorative handwriting (as well as the art of producing decorative handwriting) is called calligraphy.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The head teacher

The head teacher will:

Work with staff, parents and governors to determine the strategic development of the handwriting policy and provision in the school.

Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEND and/or a disability.

4.2 The Governor/s

They will:

Work with the head teacher to determine the strategic development of the handwriting policy and provision in the school.

The Governing Body will review this policy in line with the Policy review schedule at the FGB / FPP / C&S committee meetings

4.3 Class teachers and teaching assistants

Class teachers will be responsible for delivering the handwriting curriculum, in line with guidance in this document. Teachers will be responsible for ensuring accurate modelling of formation by teaching assistants. Teaching assistants will work with the teacher to ensure the formation and joins shared with children are consistent with policy.

5. Teaching Aims

We believe that handwriting is a developmental process with its own distinctive stages of progression from readiness for handwriting, through to letter joins, practising speed and fluency and higher presentation skills. A flexible, fluent and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with confidence and creativity. This is an entitlement that needs skilful teaching, if each individual is to reach their full potential at Bushmead Primary School.

Our aims in teaching handwriting are:

For all children to develop a well-formed, legible style of handwriting in both joined and printed styles, with increasing fluency, confidence and speed.

To raise attainment for all pupils in handwriting through a consistent approach, guided by: **The Penpals (Cambridge University Press) Handwriting Scheme.**

That all teachers and support staff must use and model the agreed style of handwriting when writing on the board or marking work.

That teachers, support staff and pupils use all opportunities for writing as handwriting practice in all writing across the curriculum.

To make provision for left handed children to develop free flowing writing.

For all children's skills in handwriting to be reflected in the presentation of their work and their love of writing.

In order to achieve this, children will be taught:

To develop fine motor control,

The importance of correct posture and paper position (whether right or left handed),

To use a pen/pencil and to hold it effectively,

To write from left to right and top to bottom on a page,

To start and finish letters correctly,

To form letters of consistent size and shape,

The language of writing and how to use the correct terminology, (e.g. ascenders)

To put regular spaces between words,

How to form upper and lower case letters,

How to join letters correctly,

How to write legibly in both joined and printed style,

To use different styles of writing for different purposes,

The importance of neat and clear presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively.

At Bushmead Primary school, handwriting is developed through systematic and regular practise in the teaching of handwriting using the **Penpals Handwriting scheme**. Penpals provides clear progression for children aged 4 to 11 starting in EYFS where children practise their gross and fine motor skills in readiness for handwriting and finishing in Years 5 & 6 where basic handwriting issues are revised and speed and fluency improved. This whole school approach ensures a consistency of style and approach which leads to an effective progression of experience and teaching. Some children who may need extra support with handwriting may receive extra interventions to support them with their writing development. Children who may need extra support with developing their hand writing skills may receive a *motor skills intervention* program to address gaps within their hand writing skills.

6. Adaptive Teaching

Penpals takes a developmental approach to the teaching of handwriting so there is an opportunity to start where the children are. If children aren't ready for the age appropriate work, then they should be working from an earlier book.

7. National Curriculum

7.1 Children in Year 1 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' (ie letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these

7.2 Children in Year 2 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 letter

7.3 Children in Years 3 and 4 should be taught to:

Pupils should be taught to:

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

increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, [for example, by 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]

7.4 Children in Years 5 and 6 should be taught to:

write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:

choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters

choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task

8. Recommended Timings

EYFS: The development of gross and fine motor writing skills are continuous and ongoing everyday. Letter formation will be taught during Little Wandle sessions. Through Drawing Club sessions, letter formation is taught and this is individual to the child's specific need.

Year 1 and 2: daily, 15 minute whole-class handwriting sessions.

Year 3: daily handwriting sessions, whole class, 15 mins in autumn term. From spring term, small group support for those who need it.

Years 4 – 6: Small group support, as required.

9. Common Approaches

To be consistent in the way in which we form individual letters by following the Cambridge Penpals Handwriting guidance

To follow the Cambridge Penpals Handwriting guidance for 'Joining letter sets' which builds on letter formation in EYFS with no joining letter sets to the teaching of joins throughout each year group.

That we are consistent in the way in which we join letters i.e. it must be remembered that some letters never join: All capital letters.

Handwriting patterns should be taught in a handwriting lesson and are a pleasurable and creative way of practising handwriting movements. They can also be used as decorative borders round pictures or written work.

Teaching the correct formation of the letters should be given highest priority and that this should be achieved by pupils before any attempt is made at joining. We aim for all children to be using a pen when going into Year 4. Since handwriting is an essential movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed handwriting style by all adults is very important. We will never simply ask children to copy models from a sheet or practise book.

Intervention measures are to be included in EHCP's or learning passports where relevant.

10. Pencil/Pen Grip

The pen or pencil should be gripped comfortably between forefinger and thumb with the second finger below to steady it. If you pick up a pen which is lying on the table in front of you with its nib towards you in line with your forearm, you instinctively pick it up in the correct grip.

11. Posture

Children should be encouraged to sit up straight with their feet on the floor. The non-writing hand must be used to steady the book or paper.

12. Monitoring arrangements

This policy and information report will be reviewed Writing Leader **every 3 years**. It will also be updated if any changes to the information are made during the year

It will be approved by the governing board.

13. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to our policies on:

English, Assessment

Version:	[4]	
Written by:	A Edwards	Date: January 2025
Last reviewed by governors:	Spring 1 2025	
Next review due by:	Spring 1 2028	