

## Handwriting Statement

Our aim is for children to develop legible, fluent, efficient handwriting.

In handwriting, as in other skills, children will develop at different rates; for that reason, it is important that there be a consistent style of handwriting throughout the school, and that all staff consider themselves to be teachers of handwriting, with a clear understanding of the progression of skills and of how to remedy errors. It is not sufficient to exhort children to improve their handwriting; the different elements need to be taught and practised. Early intervention is essential in preventing the acquisition of bad habits, which are difficult to correct.

Handwriting is taught throughout the school as follows:

### **Reception:**

In Reception, children are taught non-cursive, individual letter formation. Some cursive elements may be taught if the child is ready, such as adding lead ins and outs at the beginning and end of letters. If suitable for the child, then they will be taught to join up digraphs as they progress through the Letters and Sounds phonics scheme.

### **Year One:**

From Year One, cursive handwriting will be introduced when the teacher feels that, in their professional judgement, the child is ready.

### **Year Two:**

By the end of Year Two, the majority of children will be using joined cursive writing and know which letters are left best unjoined.

### **Key Stage Two:**

Children will be taught and encouraged to use a continuous cursive script. There may be some children for whom this may not be appropriate.

The school handwriting style is based on the following principles:

**Gross and fine motor skills:** activities to develop gross and fine motor skills are essential to the development of good handwriting. Pattern sheets and many materials and suggestions for activities are available in school.

**Posture:** children should be taught the importance of sitting upright and correctly on their chair, with their feet on the floor.

**Pencil grip:** children should use a tripod grip, and be given constant reminders until this is established. Triangular section pencils and shaped pencil holders are available in school for children who find them helpful.

**Position of paper and resources:** left handed children should be encouraged to tilt their paper slightly to the right to improve their view of what they are writing, and to reduce smudging later on when they write in ink. If a word is being modelled to them then the teacher should write the word to the right of where the child will be writing so that it is in their view and not covered by their hand. Right-handed children may find it helpful to tilt paper slightly to the left. Paper should be steadied with the free hand.

**Paper:** early writers will write on unlined paper so that they are able to write at a size appropriate to their needs. As soon as children are beginning to control the size of their writing, they will be given lined paper and exercise books, to encourage the correct placing of letters on the line.

**Correct letter formation:** children should be taught to form letters correctly, paying attention to the starting point for each, the direction of pencil movement, the shape and orientation of the letter and the relative heights/lengths of the body of each letter and any ascender or descender. Teaching should be multi-sensory and appropriate to the needs of the child.

**Joining letters:** children should be introduced to joined handwriting once they have mastered the shape of individual letters (see Appendix.) For some, a pre-cursive style (see Appendix) is introduced over the final term in Reception class. For most others, this occurs in Year 1, with some children progressing to a continuous cursive style. In Year 2, all should be using a continuous, cursive style. Consistency, fluency and legibility are consolidated through Years 3 to 6.

Children will begin by joining vowel and consonant digraphs, to facilitate the recall of spelling patterns. Later, the four basic handwriting joins will be taught systematically and then practised in short, regular and discrete handwriting sessions, linked to spelling patterns.

**Correcting mistakes:** use of rubbers is discouraged except in the case of work in pencil for display. Otherwise, mistakes in pencil or ink should be crossed out using a single horizontal line, and the whole word rewritten. Using double line spacing for work in draft allows the children space to improve their own work.

**Writing implements:** HB pencils are provided throughout the school, with early writers also offered triangular-section pencils or grips as necessary. Black ball-point or fine, fibre-tipped pens are provided for children achieving a consistently-accurate cursive style; pen 'licences' are awarded in recognition of this.

**Handwriting sessions:** handwriting is taught in regular and discrete sessions until the point at which children are confident and confident enough to not need this, usually in upper Key Stage Two.

**Further guidance:** can be sought from the English Subject Leader or the SENDCo.

**Appendix:** alphabet of capital, lower case and joined 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

Continuous Cursive  
Handwriting

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee  
Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj  
Kk Ll Mm Nn  
Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss  
Tt Uu Vv Ww  
Xx Yy Zz