

BOURNE PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY FOR TEACHING HANDWRITING

1. Aims

- 1.1 Handwriting is above all about communication and we need to be able to read what the children communicate.
- 1.2 Our aim is for children to develop legible, fluent, efficient handwriting.
- 1.3 By the time the children leave Key Stage 1 at the end of Year 2, they should have developed consistent, correct and appropriately-sized letter formation and should be beginning to join letters within words.
- 1.4 By the time the children leave Key Stage 2 at the end of Year 6, they should have developed a neat, fluent, legible and personal joined handwriting style.

2 Principles

- 2.1 In handwriting, as in other skills, children will develop at different rates; for that reason, it is important that there is 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.
- 2.2 It is not sufficient to exhort children to improve their handwriting; the different elements need to be taught and practised.
- 2.3 Early intervention is essential at every stage, to prevent the acquisition of bad habits which are difficult to correct.
- 2.4 The school handwriting style has been developed from several separate commercial models. A reference sheet showing an alphabet of capital and lower case letters and digits is included in the Appendix and should be displayed and available to children in every classroom, and to parents.
- 2.5 Children who join the school with established fluent joined handwriting will be allowed to continue with their current style of handwriting.
- 2.6 The frequency and focus of handwriting lessons will be different according to the age of the children:
 - 2.6.1 Early Years Foundation Stage: Ongoing in the environment within provision with a focus on correct letter and digit formation
 - 2.6.2 Key Stage 1: Daily lessons with a focus on accuracy, size and spacing and beginning to join
 - 2.6.3 Lower Key Stage 2: Three lessons each week focusing on accuracy, fluency and speed of writing
 - 2.6.4 Upper Key Stage 2: Three lessons each week focusing on fluency, speed of writing and developing a personal style
- 2.7 When teaching handwriting, all staff must use the school's agreed script
- 2.8 When marking work, creating displays and writing for the children (e.g. posters, flipcharts, the whiteboard), teachers do not have to follow the school's script slavishly, but must model neat, legible handwriting.

3 Key Aspects

- 3.1 **Gross and fine motor skills:** activities to develop gross and fine motor skills are essential to the development of good handwriting. Many materials and suggestions for activities are available in school. The Inclusion team support the development of motor skills through 'Speed Up' and 'Jump Ahead'.
- 3.2 **Posture:** children should be taught the importance of sitting upright and correctly on their chair, with their feet on the floor.
- 3.3 **Pencil grip:** children should use a tripod grip, and be given constant reminders until this is established. Triangular section pencils and pens are available in school for all children to support this.
- 3.4 **Position of paper:** left handed children should be encouraged to tilt their paper slightly to improve their view of what they are writing, and to reduce smudging later on when they write in ink. Right handed children may also find it helpful to tilt paper slightly. Paper should be steadied with the free hand.
- 3.5 **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. Lines at an interval of 15mm will be standard in Year 1, and 8mm or 10mm in KS2, although some children may have different needs. Where work is redrafted and presented for display, children may use plain paper and guidelines, with the same line spacing.
- 3.6 **Correct letter formation:** children are taught to form letters correctly, paying attention to the starting point for each letter, the direction of pencil movement, the shape and orientation of the letter, and the relative heights of the body of each letter, and any ascender and descender. Teaching will be multi-sensory and appropriate to the needs of the child. Our policy is to teach a letter shape which closely resembles print for early readers, and which will not need to be changed as handwriting becomes joined. All letters start at the top, apart from 'd' and 'e'.
- 3.7 **Joining letters:** children should be introduced to joined handwriting as soon as they have mastered the shape of individual letters. They will begin by joining vowel and consonant digraphs, to facilitate the recall of spelling patterns.
- 3.8 **Correcting mistakes:** use of rubbers is to be discouraged except in the case of work for display. Otherwise, mistakes in pencil or ink should be crossed out using a single horizontal line, and the whole word rewritten.
- 3.9 **Writing implements:** All children should have access to a range of writing implements, including pens and pencils, to build on the opportunities and provision of the EYFS. The right to write with a pen does not have to be earned. What matters is that writing with any implement is neat and legible.

4 Monitoring and Review

- 4.1 This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Headteacher, who reports to the Shadow Governing Body about its effectiveness.
- 4.2 This policy will be reviewed every three years.