



Brington C of E Primary School

Handwriting and Presentation Policy

Handwriting is an important life skill as a functional tool for expressing language and as part of self-image and expression of personality. Despite the increased use of computers for writing, the skill of handwriting remains important in education, employment and in everyday life. As a school, we recognise that children's ability to write well for the rest of their lives depends on firm foundations of taught skills in their primary years.

Teaching and Learning

At Brington C of E Primary School, we teach pupils to join handwriting in Year 2 using the materials from 'Read, Write, Inc.' (Stage 3). The materials provide two options in terms of leaving some letters unjoined – we prefer to teach children to join all letters where possible.

Handwriting

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. Cursive handwriting teaches pupils to join letters and words as a series of flowing movements and patterns. If linked with spelling practise, it can also aid accurate spelling, as it helps children to develop a sense of whole words and common letter strings.

Aims

We aim for children to:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting by the end of KS1
- Develop flow and speed to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes
- Automatically use clearly formed and joined handwriting in all of their writing
- Use their skills with confidence in real life situations

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

- Patterns are used initially, by writing with a variety of tools and using multisensory methods, to help free flowing hand movements and to develop muscle strength.
- Correct pencil hold and letter formation are taught from the beginning.
- Handwriting is *taught* regularly and systematically in EYFS and Year 1 alongside phonics, with joined letters introduced and mastered during Year 2 during dedicated handwriting lessons.

- Intensive intervention and additional support in handwriting is provided to existing pupils who have yet to maintain a legible, joined script once they enter KS2 (and for pupils who are new or in-year joiners).
- KS2 pupils will practise and develop their cursive writing in conjunction with spellings each week.

Techniques for teaching letter formation and joins

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

The daily phonics session in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, provides opportunities to correct handwriting errors and staff should be aware that it is vital to correct pencil grip and letter formation at this time.

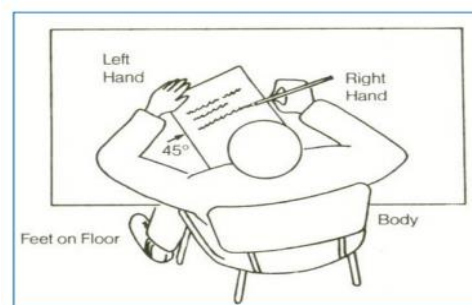
Basic structure of a handwriting session:

- Gross and fine movement warm up
- 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, sessions should be fun, varied and multi-sensory: write letters in the air, on backs or hands; orally describe letter shapes and joins with children using 'letter speak'; use a variety of writing materials including books, whiteboards, chalk, felt pens, crayons, plasticine, shaving foam etc.

Paper

Children are taught how to position their writing paper correctly and to stabilise it with the non-writing hand. The paper should be positioned at the child's midline (or just beyond) with the bottom angle placed about 2-3cm from the lower edge of the desk.



Space

- There should be an even space between words (about the size of one or two letter 'o's).
- There should be an even space between letters.
- The relative height of letters should be consistent: (ascenders, x height letters and descenders).

- Capital letters are all the same height, sit on the baseline and do not join to the small letters.
- The overall size of writing should be appropriate for age and stage. Line spacing matches this.

Sitting on the line

- All letters relate to the base line

Stringing (joining)

- Letters joins are diagonal (the arm join) or horizontal (the washing line join)
- We encourage pupils to join all lower case letters where possible using looping descenders

Slant

- All 'down lines' should be uniformly parallel and not 'a mix of slants.'

Speed

- Speed is developed in KS2 and reflects the level of automation

Style

As handwriting develops legibly, fluently, with increasing speed, KS2 children will create their own personal style. They are taught that this must be easily read by others and that they should keep it comfortable, quick, fluent and most importantly, automatic. Children are taught to adapt their writing according to its purpose, e.g. unjoined style for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and 'block' capital letters (e.g. for filling in a form).

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

In EYFS, children are encouraged to use the mark-making provision to give them experience of using a variety of writing tools. Children then progress to using a pencil to practice handwriting in a more formal setting. When a child has demonstrated consistently that they can form all letters using the correct size, orientation and fluent joins, they can progress to using a black handwriting pen for neat copies. Children will practice handwriting in their English, spelling and phonics books, with a dedicated handwriting book in Year 2 and for children receiving interventions in KS2.

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

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

- 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
- Cross through mistakes or editing alterations with a single line.

At appropriate times, pupils may be encouraged to experiment with alternative means of presenting their work for specific reasons.

Teachers and TAs 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)
- Model writing at all times, using high standards of presentation and correct letter formation

Handwriting Progression

Reception	Children are to take part in activities that develop fine and gross motor skills. The children practise correct formation as part of phonics sessions.
Year 1	The children practise the formation, sizing and positioning of each letter. The letters will be reinforced in groups with similar patterns.
Year 2	Children will be taught to join their handwriting, with the aim of a consistently joined script by the end of the academic year.
KS2	The children should be joining their writing. Pupils who have yet to achieve a fluent, consistent style will receive intensive intervention at the beginning of KS2 (along with new starters and in-year joiners).

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