Hughenden Primary School

Handwriting Policy Statement of Intent

At Hughenden Primary School we are committed to providing a safe and secure learning environment that is friendly, nurturing, inspiring and supportive for all learners.

Introduction

"Handwriting is a tool that has to work. It must be comfortable, fast and legible." (Angela Webb, Chair, National Handwriting Association)

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. We adhere to The British Dyslexia Association's recommendation that children learn the continuous cursive style. The key advantages are:

• By making each letter in one movement, children's hands develop a 'physical memory' of it, making it easier to produce the correct shape

• Because letters and words flow from left to right, children are less likely to reverse letters which are typically difficult (like b/d or p/q)

• There is a clearer distinction between capital letters and lower case

• The continuous flow of writing ultimately improves speed and spelling

Aims

We aim for children to:

• Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting

• Develop flow and speed to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes

• To automatically use clearly formed and joined handwriting in all of their writing

• Use their skills with confidence, in real life situations

Teaching and Learning

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

• Patterns relating to letter formations are first introduced using a variety of tools and multi-sensory methods. This develops free flowing hand movements and muscle strength. Letters are also introduced in varied, multi- sensory sessions: writing letters in the air, on backs or hands; orally describing letter shapes and joins with children using 'letter speak'; using a variety of

writing materials including whiteboards, chalk, paints, felt pens, crayons, plasticine, cornflour mix, shaving foam etc.

• The cursive font, with lead-ins (see Appendix 1), is taught as a specific skill, at least once a week for about 20 minutes, with additional, individual or group practise where necessary.

• Correct pencil hold and letter formation are taught from the beginning and handwriting is frequently linked with spelling.

• As digraphs are introduced, their corresponding joins are taught.

• When marking or writing comments, members of staff use cursive handwriting as appropriate.

• Teachers model cursive script on IWB, whiteboards, flip charts etc.

• Displays around the school and classroom should model clear joined handwriting as well as other fonts.

• The cursive font should be displayed in classrooms to ensure familiarity with the style.

• Older children, especially those joining the school, will not be expected to adopt the cursive joined style if they already have a fluent, legible handwriting style.

Presentation

Work must be of the child's best ability. Pupils will learn that different levels of presentation are appropriate for different pieces of work and different circumstances. However, pupils are expected to:

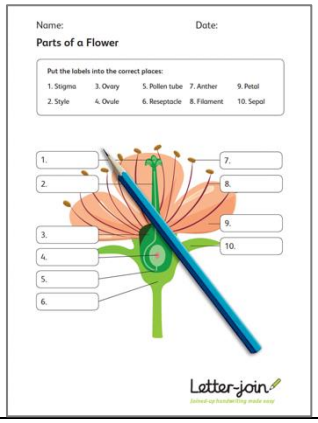
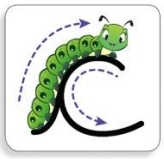
- Look after exercise books and not draw or scribble in or on them
- Increasingly plan their work to make it look attractive and well presented
- Not use writing or drawing media that is not approved or not fit for purpose
- Books will show a pride in their work and learning
- Use rulers to draw straight lines
- Set out, number and annotate work appropriately
- At appropriate times, pupils may be encouraged to experiment with alternative means of presenting their work for specific reasons.
- Cross through mistakes or editing alterations with a single line. Erasers should only be used very occasionally and at the discretion of the class teacher.
- Pupils will develop a neat, cursive handwriting style and will be using blue ink pen when the teacher decides they are ready.
- The Learning Objective, and any headings or subheadings will be underlined with a pencil and ruler.
- The date will be written and underlined at the top left-hand side of the page.
- Illustrations and diagrams will be neatly presented using pencil /colouring pencils, labels will be written in pen, where appropriate.
- Worksheets must be attached in books completely, neatly and tidily.

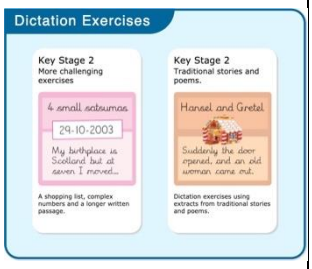
Handwriting frequency

Handwriting is a cross-curricular task and will be taken into consideration during all lessons. Formal teaching of handwriting will be carried out regularly and systematically to ensure Key Stage targets are met.

Handwriting Progression

Early Years and Reception For our youngest pupils we teach short handwriting lessons on a daily basis, which will include the following: enhancing gross motor skills such as air-writing, pattern-making and physical activities exercises to develop fine motor skills such as mark-making on paper, whiteboards, sensory trays, iPads, tablets, etc. becoming familiar with letter shapes, their sounds, formation and vocabulary correct sitting position and pencil grip for handwriting 	**Module 1 for EYFS** teaches pre-cursive patterns and cursive, lower case letters. It starts with Getting Ready for Handwriting including fine and gross motor skills warm-up exercises, correct sitting position and tripod pencil grip. The first module is divided into three sections covering: • pre-cursive patterns • easy letters and words • harder letters and words At the end of this module, children should be able to recognise and form all the lowercase letters of the alphabet and write words using the correct joining techniques.
Key Stage 1: Teaching progresses from five short, to two longer lessons per week: continuing with gross and fine motor skills exercises strengthening cursive handwriting, learning and practice numerals, capitals and printed letters; where and when to use, learning and practice KS1 SATs SPaG exercises	**Module 2 for Year 1** contains lessons for teaching how to write capital letters, printed letters, numbers and symbols, whilst reinforcing cursive handwriting using Letter-join's on-line and printed resources. It is divided into three sections covering: • capital letters • printed letters • numbers and symbols On finishing this module, children should be confident in writing all the 

	capital and printed letters, numbers and symbols and start to become familiar with their use.
Module 3 for Year 2	includes lessons to improve letter formation and orientation of letters through regular practice and to support spelling, grammar and punctuation in readiness for KS1 SATs. The sections in this module cover:  • letter families • high frequency words • joining techniques • sequencing sentences • dictation exercises • times table facts • SPaG practice for KS1 SATs With the regular handwriting practice throughout this module, children should now be developing the fluency and speed of their writing.

Lower Key Stage 2: Years 3 and 4 Handwriting lessons will continue twice a week in Lower Key Stage 2. 	**Module 4 for Year 3** is targeted at children in lower KS2 where pupils should be using a cursive style throughout their independent writing in all subjects, helping to refine their handwriting in line with the requirements of each lesson. This module covers topics such as dictation, double letters, number vocabulary, palindromes, tongue twisters, MFL (French), onomatopoeia, simile and statutory spellings. Completion of Module 4 should ensure improvement in the legibility, consistency and quality of the children's handwriting through a variety of resources which link handwriting to other areas of the curriculum.
Module 5 for Year 4	focuses on using handwriting practice to support other subjects in the curriculum and, at the same time, builds on fluency and consistency. This module aims to promote meaningful links with other subjects such as English, maths, science, geography, French and Spanish. Making such links enables children to apply the skills they are learning in context and also provides depth to the curriculum. Learners will continue to build on producing fluent, consistent and legible handwriting through the regular practice offered in this module's lessons. On concluding this module, children will have practised applying size-appropriate handwriting to all areas of the curriculum whilst maintaining fluency and legibility.
Upper Key Stage 2: Years 5 and 6 More advanced handwriting techniques will be taught during two weekly lessons: reinforcing cursive handwriting across the curriculum form-filling/labelling using printed and capital letters dictation exercises promoting quick note-taking and speedy handwriting writing skills KS2 SATs SPaG practice 	**Module 6 for Year 5** continues to build on combining fluent handwriting with other subjects across the curriculum.  In this module, learners will have plenty of opportunity to develop the stamina and skills to write at length, with accurate spelling and punctuation. With Letter-join's wide range of resources they will be able to work towards

	producing consistently neat and well-presented handwriting in all curriculum subjects. On completing this module, children should be producing cursive writing automatically, enabling them to focus on the content of their work rather than the process of writing.
Year 6	**Module 7 Year 6** presents learners with a range of tasks where they have to decide on an appropriate style of handwriting. Promoting speedy, fluent writing continues to be a strong feature. Challenging dictation exercises will refine pupils' revising and checking skills as well as boosting their handwriting speed, stamina and fluency. A range of curriculum-based worksheets will give pupils the opportunity to practise writing at length. Module 7 also contains a series of worksheets to aid KS2 SATs SPaG revision. They are designed to support year 6 pupils in meeting expected standards for spelling, punctuation and grammar, with lots of SPaG preparation and plenty of handwriting practice. By the end of this module, children should be able to adapt their handwriting for a range of tasks and purposes and to create different effects. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes, a final handwritten version, an un-joined style or capital letters. All of these writing styles are covered in this module.

When the children are producing consistently formed, sized and joined handwriting, they will be granted a 'pen license' and encouraged to write in pen where appropriate.

Techniques for teaching letter formation and joins

- Always model good handwriting
- Demonstrate formations
- 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 etc.

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.

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 appropriate to correct pencil grip, letter formation, letter joins etc. at this time.

Provision for left handed children

Left handed children always sit on the left side of right-handed children, so their elbows do not 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

Children are given experience of a variety of writing tools.

Pens (handwriting pens **not** biros) should be used by those who have achieved a consistent, cursive style. All children should write in blue ink. Children will be allowed to bring in a pen of their own choosing as long as it encourages neat, handwriting and is **not** a biro.

The children are to practise their handwriting in a handwriting book chosen for this specific purpose. Guidelines should be used when writing on plain paper.

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. Handwriting practice sheets can be printed on different colour paper if required.

Teachers 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 (enable a self- service classroom)
- Ensure that children look after resources and materials so that they learn to respect equipment and good value for money is assured.

Handwriting at Home

Pupils are encouraged to practise their handwriting at home by using the Pupil log-in for Letter-join. Teachers will set specific tasks such as:



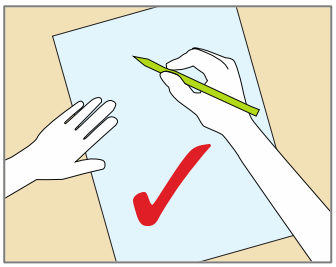


- Magic Patterns
- Magic Words
- PhonicsMatch
- Word Search
- Word Bank
- Write it Right!

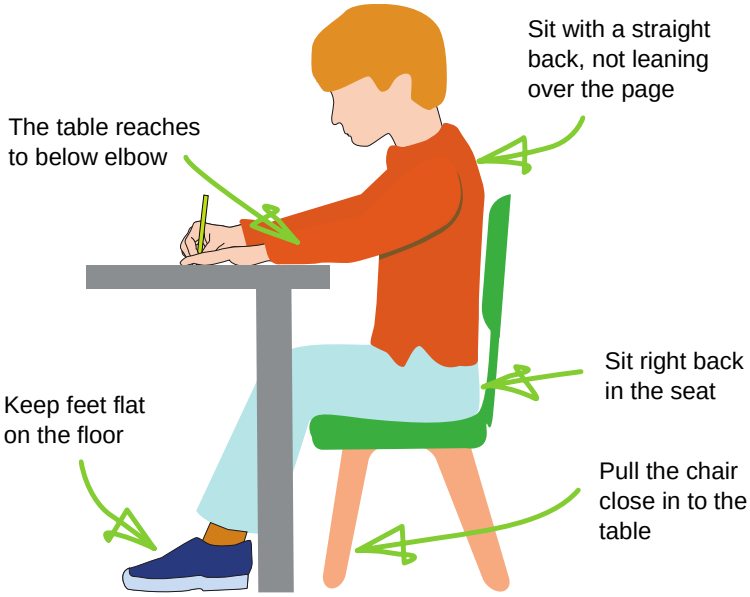
Children can also watch the word and letter animations and practice and explore other handwriting resources on Letter-join.

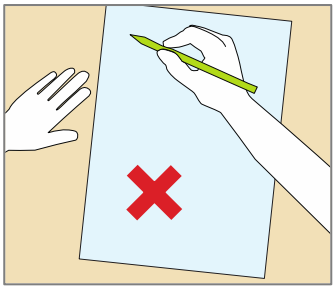
Correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting

Pupils should be taught to sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.



SITTING POSITION





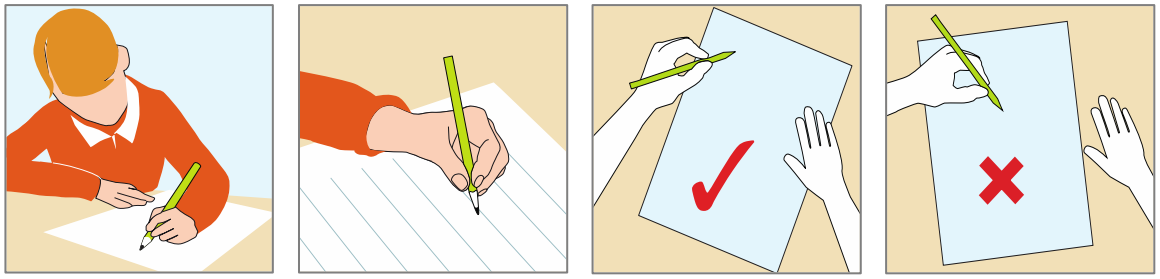
Paper position for right-handed children.

LEFT-HANDED CHILDREN

Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow the movements of right-handed teachers as they model letter formation (and vice versa). Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis.

- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.
- Pupils should position the paper/book to their left side and slanted, as shown.

- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision.
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.



The Tripod Pencil Grip

Paper position for left-handed children.

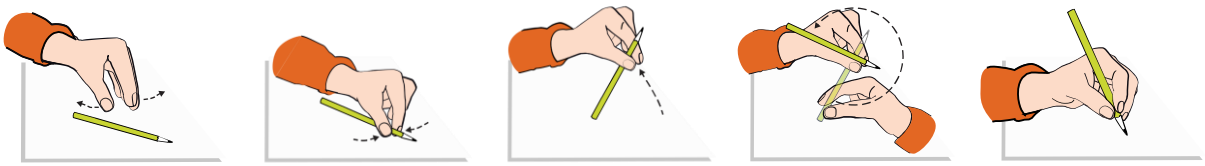
Both right and left handed children should be encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows the pen/pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pen/pencil nib. We use the Tripod Grip Rhyme:

Right-handed pencil grip



Point away the pencil, Pinch it near the tip, Lift if off the table, Spin it round... and grip.

Left-handed pencil grip



Point away the pencil, Pinch it near the tip, Lift if off the table, Spin it round... and grip.

Policy Success Criteria

We know Hughenden Primary School's Handwriting and Presentation Policy is effective if:

- A scrutiny of work confirms the appropriate development in handwriting skills
- Specific difficulties are addressed in the marking of handwriting tasks
- A scrutiny of work confirms that the presentation protocol is adhered to

Equality Statement

Hughenden Primary School provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils, and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is committed to equality and reflects and values diversity.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Head teacher and SLT within the processes of school self-evaluation.

The Governing Body will monitor the implementation of the policy.

The policy will be reviewed every 3 years or sooner should National Policy change.

Year Group	EYFS	Year 1	Year 2	Years 3 and 4	Years 5 and 6
Writing implements	A selection of beginners thick and fine writing implements. Chunky triangular pencils are introduced	This triangular pencils with grips then fine pencils with grips for most pupils	Fine pencils. Blue handwriting pens to be introduced at the discretion of the class teacher	Introduce handwriting pens as appropriate for written work. Pencil for Maths work	All pupils should be using blue handwriting pens for all written work. Pencil for Maths work.
Self-correction	Simple, one straight line through to show where they have self-corrected	Simple, one straight line through to show where they have self-corrected	Simple, one straight line through to show where they have self-corrected	Simple, one straight line through to show where they have self-corrected. Eraser or correction fluid may be used at the discretion of the teacher.	Simple, one straight line through to show where they have self-corrected. Eraser or correction fluid may be used at the discretion of the teacher.
Ruler use		All straight lines are to be drawn with a ruler. Younger pupils will need to be taught how to do this and practice.	All straight lines are to be drawn with a ruler.	All straight lines are to be drawn with a ruler.	All straight lines are to be drawn with a ruler.
New work	New work to commence on a new page		New work will usually be started on a new clean page, unless advised otherwise by the teacher.	New work will usually be started after ruling off previous work if there is usable space available.	New work will usually be started after ruling off previous work if there is usable space available.
date	All work to be dated by an adult	All work to be dated- top left - hand side of page by child or teacher, underlined with pencil and ruler.	All work to be dated- top left-hand side of page by child or teacher, underlined with pencil and ruler.	All written work to be dated by child, top left-hand side using the full date and underlined. Maths books to use short date.	All written work to be dated by child, top left-hand side using the full date and underlined. Maths books to use short date.
paper	To use unlined paper for the majority of the time	Teachers should select lined paper and exercise books, appropriate to	Teachers should select lined paper and exercise books,	Teachers should select lined paper and exercise books, appropriate to the	Teachers should select lined paper and exercise books appropriate to the size of the writing,

		the size of the writing, so that pupils can position writing correctly and orientate on the line. In Maths, to use 1cm squared books.	appropriate to the size of the writing, so that pupils can position writing correctly and orientate on the line. In Maths, to use 1cm squared books.	size of the writing, so that pupils can position writing correctly and orientate on the line. In Maths, to use 1cm squared books.	so that pupils can position writing correctly and orientate on the line. In Maths, to use A4, 0.70cm squared books.

Cursive Lower Case Letters

