

AVENUE PRIMARY SCHOOL



Handwriting Policy

Summer 2018

Our Mission Statement

'Expect the Best ...To be the Best'

School Aims:

- To ensure that all pupils whatever their race, gender, age or ability feel valued and supported to achieve their best
- To promote positive learning attitudes and behaviour and create safe and effective learning environments where all children and staff show mutual respect for one another
- To provide effective and strategic leadership at all levels
- To deliver high standards of teaching that enable children to make progress and reach high standards of attainment

Handwriting Policy and Guidelines

This policy is intended for both teachers and children

For Teachers

1. To know the correct style, letter formations and joins in handwriting to ensure consistency across the school
2. To understand the progression in handwriting so that pupils are taught in every lesson and pupils' handwriting develops and improves
3. To ensure high expectations in handwriting lessons and in other independent writing

For Pupils

1. To know the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively
2. To write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed by;
 - Having a correct pencil grip
 - Knowing that all letters start from the top, except d and e which start in the middle
 - Forming all letters correctly
 - Knowing the size and orientation of letters

Teaching time

There should be 2-3 15 minute handwriting lessons each week as well as time to practise for example, presenting work for display.

Model used

Avenue Primary School uses the Nelson Handwriting Scheme with the following letter formation:

Lower case letters

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Capitals

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

Cursive script

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

The Four Joins

1. to letters without ascenders
2. to letters with ascenders
3. horizontal joins
4. horizontal joins to letters with ascenders

The break letters (letters that aren't joined **from**) are:

b g j p q x y z s

Books

Pupils will use either a Grammar book, a specific handwriting book or the back of their English work book to practise letter formation, the joining of letters and writing on lines. The book must be agreed by the whole year group at the beginning of the academic year. To practise fluency and speed children should be given opportunities to write at speed and at length in other writing, including dictation practice.

Pencils and Pens

Pupils will use HB pencils initially and move onto using black handwriting pens or biros. (Handwriting pens are available for some pupils who find it easier to write with these pens). They may start using pens in hand-writing lessons and then begin to use them in all lessons when their writing is neat and consistent enough. Pens must be introduced in hand-writing lessons in Year Four at the latest (however this may exclude 'some' SEN pupils). When pupils start to use pens in their independent writing they may supply their own pen which must be a black ink pen. Children who have difficulty with fine motor skills may require specialist equipment such as a pencil grip which can be obtained from the SENDCo.

Getting ready to write

Seating and posture

- Chair and table should be at a comfortable height
- The table should support the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor
- Encourage children to sit up straight and not slouch
- The height of the chair should be such that the thighs are horizontal and feet flat on the floor
- Tables should be free of clutter
- Rooms should be well lit
- Left handed pupils should sit on the left of their partners

Pencil grip

- A tripod grip is the most efficient way of holding a pencil

For right handers

- Hold lightly between the thumb and forefinger about 2cm away from the point
- The paper should be placed to the right tilted slightly to the left
- Use the left hand to steady the paper

For left handers

- Hold lightly between thumb and forefinger resting on the first knuckle of the middle finger
- Hold about 3cm from the tip
- The hand should be kept below the writing line although some pupils will find a 'hook' more comfortable
- The paper should be tilted slightly to the right at about 20 - 30°
- Use the right hand to steady the paper

Please note it is very important that a right handed child is NOT seated on the left hand side of a left handed child as their elbows may collide!

Assessment

Assessment of handwriting is ongoing throughout the year as part of writing using the end of year expectations. Where children are below year group expectations, this will need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Phase leaders in team meetings, senior leaders and the core team will monitor children's handwriting and presentation in books (as part of the monitoring cycle).

The following should be considered:

- Is the writing generally legible?
- Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
- Are the joins made correctly?
- Are the spaces between the letters, words and lines appropriate?

- Is the size of the writing appropriate?
- Is the writing properly aligned?
- Are the writing standards achieved by the majority of pupils in line with end of year expectations in the National Curriculum?

Individual Assessment

Children should be observed as they write during handwriting lessons – the teacher must circulate, monitor and intervene. Teachers also need to monitor and mark whole pieces of writing. The following should be considered:

- Is the posture correct?
- Does the child hold the pencil correctly?
- Does the child use the correct movement when forming and or joining letters?
- Are any letters reversed or inverted?
- Does the child write fluently and rhythmically?
- Is the writing easily legible?
- Is the pupil’s handwriting development in line with end of year expectations in the National Curriculum?

Teacher Modelling

It is essential that teachers model neat and cursive writing in shared writing on the whiteboard, interactive whiteboard and in pupils’ books. Teachers’ writing must be consistent with the Nelson model and they must use the relevant style of handwriting dependent on the phase they are working in.

Application

Pupils should be encouraged to apply the hand-writing they are taught in all independent writing. Teachers must have high expectations of all pupils and expect to see examples of what they have been taught in all books.

If pupils are learning joined hand-writing they should be expected to use this in their written work. Pupils should only attempt joins if they have been taught them.

Teachers must monitor this and use praise and next step marking to bring this to pupils’ attention where appropriate.

Reviewed Summer 2018

Next Review Summer 2020

APPENDIX 1

Progression ladder

Reception

- Pre-writing stage- patterning
- Individual letter formation
- Word formation based on letter groups

The National Curriculum English Programmes of Study provide guidance on teaching handwriting:

Year 1 pupils 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' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these
- Make links with phonics and spelling

Year 2 pupils 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 not joined
- 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 letters

Year 3-4 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 not joined
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, e.g. by ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.

Year 5-6 pupils should be taught to:

- Write legibly, fluently, with increasing speed and personal style by:
- Choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding, as part of their personal style, whether or not to join specific letters
- Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task (e.g. quick notes, letters)

APPENDIX 2

Examples of handwriting joins

The
first
join

am an as ap in is iv un ur

The
second
join

eb ah al ch ck af il it sh sl

The
third
join

rr fe on ow ox fa ve vo wa

The
fourth
join

oh ok otrh rk rl rt wt wh

The
break
letters

ba bu ge go ju pa pi xe yo ze

- Diagonal join to letters without ascenders
ai, ar, un
- Horizontal join to letters without ascenders
ou, vi, wi
- Diagonal join to letters with ascenders
ab, ul, it
- Horizontal join to letters with ascenders
ol, wh, ot

Examples of the break letters

big

green

jelly

happy

unique

xylophone

zebra

swans