

Fosse Bank School

Presentation and Handwriting Policy

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of handwriting at Fosse Bank School and the standards of presentation of written work.

Aims

To enable all our pupils to:

- Become confident and independent in their approach to handwriting.
- Develop a comfortable handwriting style that is joined, clear and fluent.
- Adapt their handwriting to a range of tasks.
- Understand the importance of legible and neat presentation in communicating effectively, and in creating the right 'first' impression of their work.

Principles For The Teaching Of Handwriting

Our approach to the teaching and learning of handwriting:

- Expresses the importance of correct posture, pencil hold and letter formation
- Ensures that errors in any of the above are immediately dealt with and the corrections reinforced with further practice.
- Involves the teacher in constant interaction with the pupil in formal handwriting lessons
- Encourages practice at home.
- Teaches cursive handwriting only when the child is forming his letters correctly in a consistent manner with correct ascenders and descenders.
- Allows for individual differences as the pupil develops a cursive handwriting style.
- Ensures that all staff are knowledgeable and take an active part in the pupil's handwriting development, even though they may not be directly involved with teaching handwriting formally within the English curriculum.
- Ensures positive encouragement and praise for effort shown and progress made.
- Shows achievement in this area through displays of children's work.
- Stresses the importance of legible and neat handwriting that enhances presentation and gives a good 'first' impression.

Strategies For The Teaching Of Handwriting

Handwriting forms an integral part of the whole curriculum and its importance in terms of legibility and presentation is therefore, encouraged by all subject teachers. Pupils are allowed to work at their own pace, joining letters in their normal written work when they are ready. (Appendix 1)

At Key Stage One it is taught on an almost daily basis as it forms an integral part of the teaching of reading and writing. The emphasis is always on correct letter formation.

At Key Stage Two it is formally taught one lesson a week in Years 3 and 4. In years 5 and 6 a neat legible handwriting style is always encouraged and taught formally if this is required.

At Fosse Bank we have outlined the five main stages of the pupil's handwriting development. Pupils proceed through the levels at their own pace, usually starting to write cursively in Year 1.

Stage 1: Pre-writing (3+ years)

Activities designed to develop concentration and skills such as eye-hand co-ordination and control, hand movement from left to right and from top to bottom of the page. Sand trays, tracing patterns etc: are used. Pupils are taught to hold a pencil comfortably and appropriately (1-2cm from pencil point).

Stage 2: Writing alphabet

Activities designed to teach the conventional ways of forming letters, both upper and lower case. Pupils introduced to 'exit' strokes at end of letters and taught to space letters and words appropriately with letters that are regular in size and shape. Children write using a pencil.

Stage 3: Semi – cursive

Activities designed to teach cursive handwriting. Introduction of 'entry' strokes followed by baseline joins and then others. The pupil is encouraged to join some letters in his normal written work. Regularity of shape and size constantly emphasised. Handwriting pens are introduced.

Stage 4: Cursive

Activities designed to reinforce knowledge of joins and to develop a style that allows him to be comfortable and fluent when writing, as well as legible. It is at this stage (usually Year 3) a fountain pen can be introduced. Rules for joins can be found in Appendix 2.

Stage 5: Writing styles

Activities to further develop the pupil's handwriting style for speed and clarity, teaching pupils to use different forms of handwriting for different purposes.

Special Needs

Children with specific difficulties with handwriting are given extra time to complete work, and to practise. When possible special work is completed on a word processor. Children also practise the 'lazy eights' exercise on a regular basis.

Strategies For Ensuring Progress And Continuity

All staff follow a model to teach pupils to form letters correctly and ensure the correct pencil grip is used. (see Appendix 1)

Assessment

The child's progress is monitored by the class teacher. Formative assessment is mostly carried out informally by teachers in the course of their teaching. Assessment takes the form of a specific assignment which is kept as evidence of attainment, should it reveal 'significant' achievement in this area.

At the end of the year, a final assessment is made. A piece of annotated writing is kept as evidence of the level attained in the pupil's record file.

Feedback to pupils

This is achieved through the immediate marking of work. Effective marking aims to help the pupil correct errors quickly so that these do not become habit forming. It is preferably done while the task is being carried out. (see Marking Policy)

Presentation guidelines

Key Stage 1

- Children are permitted to use pencil until they receive their pen licence with the aim of achieving by this during Year 3.
- A short title should be used for each piece of work. It is not necessary to write learning objectives in full, although the title should relate to this.
- Children should use pencil when redrafting their work or undertaking peer marking or responding to the teachers marking.
- Biro's, gel pens and felt tips should not be used by children.
- All work should be dated in the top left corner of the page. The long date should be used in all work except the short date used for maths.
- Both date and title should be written on a separate line and underlined with a ruler in pencil.
- A suitable sized margin should be drawn in any books that do not already have this. (A ruler width is appropriate on plain paper and approximately 3 squares in maths books)
- Loose sheets should be either trimmed and glued into books or kept in a separate folder. Wherever possible, worksheets should be avoided.
- Children should not deface their books in any way.

Key stage 2

Presentation guidelines are as for Key Stage 1 with the following additions:

- Fountain pens may be used in Years 4, 5 and 6.
- Learning objectives should be recorded as the title of the piece of work.
- Unacceptable presentation of work should be redone.
- All children should use blue ink pens to record their written work, with the exception of diagrams and maths, which should be completed in a sharp HB pencil.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the Governors to agree and then monitor the Handwriting Policy.

Signed..... Chair of Governors

Date.....

APPENDIX 1

NOTES FOR LEFT - HANDERS

Left – handers need special consideration especially in the early years. The following rules should be applied.

- Paper should be placed to the writer's left side, then slanted to suit each individual. This allows writers to have their hand below the line, in a non-inverted position, without interrupting their line of vision.
- Free flowing pencils that do not smudge are recommended.
- Left handed writers should sit on the left hand side of the desk to allow arm movement
- A seat, not only for left – handers, high enough to allow the writers to see over their hand is a help, and appropriate lighting to make sure they are not writing in the shadow of their own hand.
- The pen, or pencil, needs to be held far enough from the point to allow the writer to see the written trace.
- Many left – handers find a clockwise movement much easier than an anti – clockwise one that is needed for so many letters. Letter movement may be a problem and the left – hander should be more closely watched.