



GRANGE SCHOOL

A Culture of Continuous Improvement

Handwriting Policy

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Rational

Handwriting is a complex skill involving a range of cognitive, linguistic, perceptual and motor abilities. It is a developmental process with its own distinctive stages of progression from readiness for handwriting through to letter joins, practising speed and fluency and higher presentation skills. 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. Cursive handwriting teaches pupils to join letters and words as a series of flowing movements and patterns. Handwriting skills are to be taught regularly and systematically through the use of the Nelson handwriting scheme. The cursive style is quick and easy to learn, particularly when it is practised from an early stage. Pupils will learn to form individual letters appropriately and accurately first and then by term three of Year One, pupils will begin to join their handwriting. This practise is therefore carefully planned and implemented so that all children can achieve a good standard of writing. As children progress through school, the requirement to write legibly and fluently, at speed, increases considerably and the cost of being unable to do so also increases.

Aims

As a school, our aims in teaching handwriting are:

That all the pupils will:

1. Understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate their meaning clearly
2. Develop a consistent size and shape of letters and a regularity of space between letters and words; flow and movement will be fluent and smooth
3. Have established a style consistent with the 'Grange handwriting' by Year 6

To raise children's self-motivation and esteem through the establishment of best handwriting practice

To establish and maintain a high profile of handwriting and presentation skills by displaying and rewarding work that meets the standard

In order to achieve the above aims, the following principles need to be followed:

Teaching and Learning

Handwriting is taught regularly and systematically in classes, groups or individually as appropriate.

Patterns are used initially, by writing with a variety of tools and using multisensory methods, to help free flowing hand motions.

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

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

Display writing throughout the school includes cursive writing and computer generated writing using the comic sans script.

Foundation Stage Children will begin in Reception with a wide variety of writing skills ranging from simply making marks to writing their own name unaided. They will move from gross to finer motor skills using a variety of tactile methods. They need opportunities to make

marks in their own way and to gradually refine these into recognisable patterns and eventually individual letters. All Foundation Stage staff, including support staff, must be aware of directionality and when children are showing a firm interest in writing their name, they should be encouraged to use correct directionality. To aid co-ordination, sand trays and sticks (or fingers), paper, paint and large brushes, modelling materials, blackboards and chalk may be used. They will be taught the use of capital letters for names and beginning of sentences.

Suggested materials to develop gross and fine motor skills:

- Sand trays/seeds and other tactile materials
- Letter shapes/feely letter shapes
- Large paper and brushes to make writing patterns
- Blackboards and chalk
- Plasticine, play dough, clay

Letter formation will be introduced in Reception. It is expected that most children will be writing a good number of the high frequency words with accurate letter formation by the end of Reception.

Key Stage One

In accordance with the National Literacy Strategy the children are taught how to form both lower case and upper case letters and how to join them, whilst still developing fine and gross motor skills with a range of multi-sensory activities. Handwriting is enforced daily and can be linked to the phonics session during Literacy lessons.

The children are taught to:

- Write from left to right and from top to bottom
- Write on the line and use finger spaces to differentiate between words.
- Start and finish letters correctly.
- Be consistent with the size and shape of letters and the spacing of letters and word.
- Have the correct pencil grip
- Find a convenient position for their page
- Have the correct posture and position.

In year 1, during Christmas and Lent terms, letters should be written separately (not joined yet) although you'll see that the letters have the flicks on them so children are ready to join in the summer term.

By the end of Year 2, the children should be able to join the letters correctly. It is expected that by the end of this stage, the majority will be writing unaided, using capitals where appropriate and presenting their written work legibly. An introduction to joined writing can be started when a child has developed a consistent, clear print style, where letters are generally correctly formed.

Key Stage Two

During this stage the children continue to have regular practice of handwriting. We aim for them to develop a clear and fluent style and by the end of Key Stage two, be able to adapt their handwriting for the following different purposes:

- A neat legible hand writing for finished, presented work
- A faster script for notes
- Print for labelling maps or diagrams

In Year 3 a pencil may be used until the children are writing confidently and neatly in a joined style. When this has been achieved, they can progress to using a pen. Throughout the school, handwriting will be taught on a weekly basis using the following timings as guidelines:

Reception

The development of gross and fine motor writing skills are continuous and ongoing every day. Letter formation will be taught as they are introduced during their phonics sessions.

Year 1

3 x 15 minute sessions per week

Year 2

2 x 20 minute sessions per week

When the children are in year 5 and 6 and they are confident hand writers, they will be encouraged to develop their own consistent style.

Assessment

Throughout their time at Grange School, samples of children's writing are collected and moderated against National Curriculum criteria. As part of the school's assessment policy, a sample of children's writing is completed and assessed three times per academic year.