



Handwriting Policy

Intent

Good handwriting is such a vital tool for life. Even in a digital age, we still need to write in all aspects of our life for all purposes. We believe that giving children a secure start in learning the basics will stand them in good stead for the future. Having a legible, fluent style will not only help children to be able to write more speedily but will also make their writing a greater delight to read and look at.

Here at Market Weighton Infant School, we aim to teach each child to write legibly, fluently and at reasonable speed. We do this through the Read Write Inc Handwriting linked to the RWI phonics and writing programme. This helps to ensure consistency and progression.

Aims

For all staff

- To know the correct style, letter formations and joins in handwriting, to ensure consistency across the school
- To understand the progression in handwriting so that pupils are taught these skills in every lesson and pupils' handwriting develops and improves
- To ensure high expectations in handwriting lessons and that pupils are expected to apply the same standards in other independent writing or curriculum areas

For Pupils

- To know the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively
- To write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed by;
 1. Having a correct pencil grip
 2. Knowing the correct starting point of all letters
 3. Forming all letters correctly
 4. Knowing the size and orientation of letters

Implementation

Handwriting should be taught daily during RWI sessions.

Children progression in handwriting is linked to their RWI phonic progression pace. As each new phonic sound is introduced, so too is the letter formation with a handwriting ditty to aid their memory for writing.

Stage 1

These lessons are taught while children read the Red, Green, Purple, Pink and Orange Storybooks.

The online 'checklists' for each letter are in the Handwriting files in Read Write Inc. Phonics Online on Oxford Owl.

Stage 1a: Children practise correct letter formation.

Stage 1b: Children learn where to place the letters on the writing line.

Stage 2

These lessons are taught while children read the Yellow, Blue and Grey Storybooks. The online 'checklists' for each letter are in the Handwriting files in Read Write Inc. Phonics Online on Oxford Owl.

Children learn a mature style of writing that will lead to joined-up writing.

Stage 3

These lessons are also taught while children read the Yellow, Blue and Grey Storybooks.

The online 'checklists' for each letter are in the Handwriting files in Read Write Inc. Phonics Online on Oxford Owl.

Children learn the two basic joins: the arm join (diagonal) and the washing line join (horizontal) and the two variables for each join.

Handwriting position

We teach children that when you use the handwriting signal (one hand flat on page, one hand gripping pencil correctly) they automatically go into the perfect handwriting position:

- feet flat on the floor (FOF)
- bottom at the back of the chair (BBC)
- tummy one fist from the table (TNT)
- shoulders down and relaxed
- back leaning forward slightly
- left/right hand holding the page
- left/right hand ready in a tripod grip (see Appendix 3)

Paper position

- Right-handers - writing paper should be placed to the right, tilted slightly to the left.
- Left-handers - writing paper should be placed to the left and tilted further to the right.
- Use the A3 laminated 'Handwriting Paper Position Sheets' with children for guidance

Left-Handers

Left-handers are in a minority and our writing system favours the right-hander. It is therefore very important that left-handers are given plenty of support and encouragement at all times. They should be seated at the end of a table. If they are seated next to a right-hander, their elbows will collide!

The grip the left-hander uses means the pencil is pushed as the child writes, whereas the right-hander pulls their pencil across the page as they write. It is important that the left-hander's pencil is not too sharp, so that it will run smoothly across the page.

In FS and Year 1 children write with yellow-tipped pencils. These pencils are specially designed to suit a left-handed grip.

When teaching left-handed children about leaving spaces between words, be aware that these children need to place their finger/spacer in place from above, rather than below. When forming the 'f' and 't', the left-hander often crosses these letters from right to left (instead of left to right). Many left-handers therefore find it easier to leave the 'f' unjoined.

Handwriting Stage 1a: Letter formation

These lessons are taught while children read the Red, Green, Purple, Pink and Orange Storybooks. The online 'checklists' for each letter are in the Handwriting files in Read Write Inc. Phonics Online.

Children learn correct letter formation using the same picture mnemonics they have already learnt in the Speed Sounds Set 1 Lessons.

These letters are now taught in handwriting 'families':

- 'Around' letters: **c a o d g q**
- 'Down' letters: **l t b p k h i j m n r u y**
- 'Curly' letters: **e f s**
- 'Zig-zag' letters: **v w z x**.

Children write on plain paper in phonics practice books.
Follow the handwriting order above.
(See RWI Handwriting Stage 1a)

Handwriting Stage 1a.1

These lessons are taught while children read the Red, Green, Purple, Pink and Orange Storybooks. The online 'checklists' for each letter are in the Handwriting files in Read Write Inc. Phonics Online.

Once children can form the letters correctly, they learn how to place the letters on the line. Picture mnemonics help children to visualise the size and placement.

Children to work through the letters in order below.

Some small letters are called 'boat letters': **a c e i m n o r s u v w x z**.

- Letters that are written below the line are called 'water letters': **g j p q y**.
- Tall letters are called 'sun letters': **b d h k l t f**.

Children should write on wide-lined paper often in phonics practice books.



During the session in this stage, the teacher is to focus on a new letter, a previous taught letter and a letter that the children are forming incorrectly during the spell with Fred fingers session

Handwriting Stage 1b: Relative size of letters

These lessons are taught while children read the Red, Green, Purple, Pink and Orange Storybooks. The online 'checklists' for each letter are in the Handwriting files in Read Write Inc. Phonics Online.

This stage focusses on the size of letter in relation to other letters.

Once children can form the letters correctly, they learn how to place the letters on the line. Picture mnemonics help children to visualise the size and placement.

- Some small letters are called 'boat letters': **a c e i m n o r s u v w x z**.
- Letters that are written below the line are called 'water letters': **g j p q y**.
- Tall letters are called 'sun letters': **b d h k l t f**.

Children should write on wide-lined paper often in phonics practice books.
(See RWI Handwriting Stage 1b)



Handwriting Stage 2

These lessons are taught while children read the Yellow, Blue and Grey Storybooks. The online 'checklists' for each letter are in the Handwriting files in Read Write Inc. Phonics Online. Children learn a mature style of writing that will lead to joined-up writing.

There are six characters who introduce the formation family: six sisters, two uncles and their two pets.

(See RWI Handwriting Stage 2)

Handwriting Stage 3

These lessons are taught while children read the Yellow, Blue and Grey Storybooks. The online 'checklists' for each letter are in the Handwriting files in Read Write Inc. Phonics Online. Children learn a mature style of writing that will lead to joined-up writing.

There are two basic joins:

- the arm join (diagonal)
- the washing line join (horizontal).

(See RWI Handwriting Stage 3)

Teaching Children to Form Capital Letters

We teach phonics using lower case letters in the Speed Sounds Lessons. Children are introduced to reading words with capital letters in the Storybooks.

We display lowercase letters written alongside the equivalent capital letters to support children to recognise and write these.

(See Appendix 8 The Capital Letter Formation Chart.)

Note that capital letters are not joined in either formal or casual cursive scripts. *Hold a sentence* and *Proofread* activities teach children to use capital letters correctly in their writing. These weekly activities provide lots of practice to recognise, write and identify missing capital letters.

Use a consistent punctuation mime to help children remember a capital letter (make a triangle shape with your arms above your head – fingers together and elbows apart).

During each *Write About*, we model how to write a sentence using capital letters and correct punctuation before children write their own. After writing, children proofread their compositional writing with their partner and check for correct use of capital letters.

Expectations

Adults:

It is essential that all teaching and non-teaching staff model neat and cursive writing (where appropriate in Y2) in shared writing on the whiteboard, interactive whiteboard and in pupils' books. Staff writing must be consistent with the RWI model at all times when dealing with children and especially in children's books.

Pupils:

Pupils should be encouraged to apply the handwriting 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 handwriting they should be expected to use this in all their written work. Pupils should only attempt joins if they have been taught them.

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

Resources

Pupils should use HB pencils which are appropriately sharpened. At first children will use tripod pencils with in-built grips for any focus writing in Foundation Stage and Year 1. Children will also have access to a wider range of 'mark making' materials for other writing purposes and 'free choice' writing. If staff are involved in any writing experience with children, they should aim to praise any form of writing, yet encourage correct posture, pencil grip and paper position at all times. Children should be made aware of any incorrect letter formation if appropriate.

In FS and Year 1, yellow tipped pencils are for left handed children, red tipped pencils for right handers.

In Year Two, children are introduced to thinner writing pencils and pens, if they are ready for these. Again, the emphasis should be on ensuring correct posture, pencil grip and paper position at all times.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

Children's self-confidence and self-esteem are high at Market Weighton Infant School. Using the structured RWI programme has a positive impact on the whole child, as it helps to build confidence through teaching children to write in small stages alongside their phonics. RWI systems are used as a whole school approach to teaching and learning and this ensures that all children can develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to succeed at school and in the wider world.

Teachers explain content clearly. This helps pupils, and particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to understand and practise key skills regularly. Teachers carefully consider how to adapt activities to ensure that pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) access fully the English curriculum including Handwriting. This may take the form of specialised resources (pencils, pencil grips, paper or indeed electronic writing tools).

Health & Safety issues

Any child that causes concern should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) following the school's Child Protection Policy and procedures. If a child is finding any aspect of PSHE and Relationships Education difficult, staff should discuss this with the DSL or SENCO.

Date: Spring Term 2023

Review: Spring Term 2024

Equality Analysis Impact

This policy was written with reference to and in consideration of the school's Equality Policy. Does the policy have an adverse effect on employees, pupils or the wider community and therefore have a significant effect in terms of equality? **No**

Does the policy have an adverse effect upon a group with protected characteristics? (sex, race, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, age) **No**

Any questions or concerns regarding this policy should be made to the headteacher.