

### **Handwriting policy – Ravensfield**

Handwriting at Ravensfield focuses on the children developing a legible, consistently joined style. Handwriting is an essential skill for life and it is the responsibility of all teaching staff to facilitate the development of this skill. This policy sets the expectations for handwriting for children, teachers and support staff at Ravensfield Primary School.

#### **Foundation Stage:**

**Nursery:** The pre-learning to joined letter formation is introduced in Nursery. Children are involved in pre-writing activities to develop their fine motor coordination skills, manipulative skills and hand-eye co-ordination. Children practise forming letters using a variety of materials, such as sand and paint. Children learn the letter shape using the linked rhyme with the letter sound.

#### **Mile stones by the end of Nursery:**

- Use one-handed tools and equipment, for example, making snips in paper with scissors.
- Use a comfortable grip with good control when holding pens and pencils.
- Show a preference for a dominant hand

**Reception:** Children are involved in pre-writing activities to develop their fine motor coordination skills, manipulative skills and hand-eye co-ordination. Children continue to practise forming letters using a variety of materials, such as sand and paint. Children learn the letter shapes using the Read Write Inc rhymes in line with their Read Write Inc sessions. Handwriting is taught through daily phonics and writing sessions. All adults working in EYFS will model printed writing and use this whenever they are writing with, for or to the children. Writing station and tasks will be supervised (where possible) by a teaching member of staff who will reinforce the correct grip, seating position and letter shape. Children who have not yet mastered a tripod pencil grip will engage in dough-gym activities to develop the muscles within the hands. Children who do not fall into this category but have not mastered correct formation by February half-term should receive extra support to do so.

#### **Mile stones by the end of Reception:**

- Develop the foundations of a handwriting style which is fast, accurate and efficient
- Children should know and form the lower-case letters and the capital letters accurately.
- The correct pencil grip will be taught along with the correct seating position.
- All children should leave reception confident in printing with accurate formation.

**Year 1:** Children continue to be taught the correct formation of the letters in handwriting lessons and in conjunction with phonic work. Joining of digraphs and trigraphs will begin to be taught in line with their exposure to the sounds from Read Write Inc sessions. Children must be confident at formation before they begin joining. This will be supported during explicit handwriting sessions in class – teachers must model both printed and joined letters during handwriting sessions. Children who require more support will be identified. The correct pencil grip and seating position will be reinforced and where necessary, corrective rubber pencil grips or triangular pencils for those needing them will be used. Handwriting will be taught discreetly for a minimum of ten minutes per day.

#### **Mile stones by the end of Year 1:**

- All children will demonstrate accurate letter and number formation (both capital and lower case).
- Letter sizing should be generally consistent.
- Ascending and descending letters should be clear and correct in proportion.

**Year 2:** Children continue to be taught handwriting regularly (daily at the beginning of the year) in handwriting lessons and in conjunction with phonic work. Joining of digraphs and trigraphs will continue to be taught in line with their exposure to the sounds from Read Write Inc sessions. Children must be confident at letter formation before they begin joining. Children will be introduced to joining using the agreed school style. Subsequent terms will consolidate this and will focus on refining joins and overall presentation of handwriting. Joins will not be looped in Year 2. This will be taught in LKS2. Teachers must model both printed and joined letters

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during handwriting sessions to support those who are not yet ready to join. In all other sessions, joined handwriting will be modelled. Children who require more support will be identified.

### **Mile stones by the end of Year 2:**

- Children will be using some joins to join their handwriting, though this may not be consistent.
- Spacing between the words will be appropriately sized.
- Letter formation should be consistent, with accurate ascending letters and descending letters, which are in proportion to the rest of the script.

### **Key Stage Two**

**Years 3 and 4:** In Year 3, children will be taught to joined looped letters. The formation of 'k' will change to suit the RWI joining style (Appendix C).

Children who need it, will have regular handwriting practice to reinforce the joins learned in KS1 until they are transferred consistently into independent writing. Daily practise to reinforce joined writing to aid presentation, legibility and the finer points of the joins will continue for the whole class at the beginning of the year, though this may decrease if presentation is strong. Writing should increase in fluency and speed. Staff will model all written work in the school's joined handwriting style.

### **Mile stones by the end of LKS2:**

- Children are expected to join their handwriting in accurate joined script and with fluency.
- Letter formation should be consistent, with accurate ascending letters and descending letters, which are in proportion to the rest of the script.

Children who have not yet developed a fluent handwriting style in independent writing by the end of Year 3 will be placed on an individual handwriting program. Children who show a decline in the level of consistency and accuracy of their handwriting will receive an individual handwriting program until they reach their previous standard.

### **Years 5 and 6:**

Children who have not yet developed a fluent handwriting style in independent writing will be placed on an individual handwriting program. Those who have not will be monitored in all written work. This is particularly important for Year 6, where children must consistently join to achieve the expected standard in writing.

It is recognised that older children like to develop a more personal style. However, this must be broadly consistent with the school style. Children who show a decline in the level of consistency and accuracy of their handwriting will receive an individual handwriting program until they reach their previous standard.

### **Adapting the school's current handwriting policy**

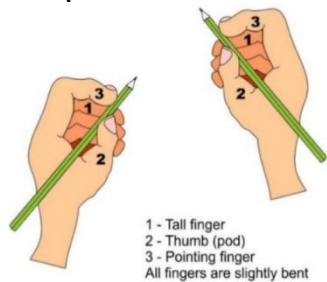
The new progression changes the school's style by removing lead-in lines. Letters will no longer all begin on the line, but will instead begin where the letter itself is formed, in line with the Read Write Inc letter formation. This decision has been made in line with publications which have brought into question the effectiveness and necessity of lead-ins. Many children across the school have currently developed a confident style using lead-ins. For those children, the handwriting style need not change to suit the new policy. Instead, children who are learning to form and join letters will be taught without the lead ins. This means that, within a few years, the students using lead ins will filter out.

### **Whole school principles of handwriting**

- Mistakes should be crossed out with a straight line and pencil, or rubbed out.
- Errors and misconceptions in handwriting should be corrected by teachers through the usual feedback processes.
- Capital letters are not joined and apostrophes create a break in letter joins.
- Teaching staff should model using the school's style and comments in books should follow the same format.

- Handwriting should be suitable to the task. There may be times in school when joined handwriting is not appropriate to the task you are doing. For example, making quick notes.
- The school's handwriting style should be followed in all exercise books and in modelled writing around the room
- New displays created around school will use a school-wide dyslexia friendly font
- Before writing lessons begin, the teachers must check that all children can see the board without having to turn their bodies and that left-handed children are seated correctly so that they are not bumping elbows with right handed children.

### Pencil Grip



- Pupils are encouraged to develop and use a tripod grip when writing. Teachers will correct 'poor' pencil grips whenever it is seen. See diagram for left and right-handed tripod grip. Children should be given corrective rubber pencil grips or triangular pencils where necessary.



Seated position

- **Bottom Back in Chair (BBC)** reminds the children to sit with the bottom to the back of the chair
- **Tummy Next to Table (TNT)** reminds them to sit with their tummy near the table and 6 feet on the floor tells them to sit with all four legs of the chair and their own 2 feet touching the floor.
- Using the prompts BBC, TNT and 6 feet on the floor, children are reminded on the correct seated position for handwriting in order to produce a high standard of presentation.

### Left-handed children

- Left-handed children may experience more difficulty with handwriting than right-handed children.
- Left-handed children should be seated to the left of any right-handed child, but not with their left to a wall or other obstruction. There must be sufficient space to the left of the left-hander to enable them to place their paper in a comfortable position.
- Young left-handed children tend to hold their pencils close to the lead and thus cover their writing with their hand. This means that, although they know there are spaces between the words, their writing appears without any. Teachers are to ensure that the pencil grip is high enough from the paper to leave a gap, yet remain comfortable. This can be achieved, if needed, by using corrective rubber pencil grips.

### Pens

- Children who demonstrate consistent letter formation, accurate joined script and who maintain neat presentation may begin writing with a handwriting pen if they choose to (writing does not need to be

perfect for children to start writing in pen, but must be consistent). Some children may choose to remain writing in pencil. This will be a choice made with the input of both the child and their class teacher. Pens will not be given as a 'reward', but the choice to switch to a pen will be offered to those who are displaying a consistent, joined style.

### **Appendices**

- A – Letter formation
- B – Capital letter formation
- C – Introducing joins
- D – Teaching sequence
- E – Outcomes in handwriting by year group