



Corbridge Church of England

First School

HANDWRITING POLICY

Inspired by Jesus, we make a difference in God's world by being 'the best that we can be'.

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English Lead

As a school we recognise that handwriting is an important skill and children's ability to write fluently for the rest of their lives depends on a good foundation of taught handwriting from the early years of their education. We believe that handwriting 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. A flexible, fluent and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with confidence and creativity. This is an entitlement that needs skilful teaching if each individual is to reach their full potential.

This policy applies to all staff, pupils and volunteers across Reception to Year 4. The Headteacher and English Subject Leader are responsible for policy implementation and for ensuring staff receive appropriate training. Class teachers are responsible for daily implementation; support staff must follow agreed modelling when working with pupils. Governors (or the governing committee) will receive an annual report on handwriting standards as part of English curriculum monitoring.

Aims

This policy operates within statutory expectations for the EYFS and the National Curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Handwriting instruction is taught as part of the English curriculum and supports pupils' transcription skills (spelling, handwriting) alongside composition. This policy aligns with the school's curriculum intent and will be reviewed in line with school improvement priorities and any statutory changes.

At Corbridge CofE First School, our aims in teaching handwriting are:

- For all children to develop a well-formed, legible style of handwriting in both joined and printed styles, with increasing fluency, confidence and speed;
- To raise attainment for all pupils in handwriting through a consistent approach;
- That all teachers and support staff use and model the agreed style of handwriting for their year group when writing on the board or marking work;
- That teachers, support staff and pupils use all opportunities for writing as handwriting practice in all writing across the curriculum;
- To make provision for left handed children to develop free flowing writing;
- For all children's skills in handwriting to be reflected in the presentation of their work and their joy of writing.

In order to achieve this, children will be taught:

- To develop fine motor control;
- The importance of correct posture and paper position whether right or left handed;
- To use a pen/pencil and to hold it effectively;
- To write from left to right and top to bottom on a page;
- To start and finish letters correctly;
- To form letters of consistent size and shape;
- The language of writing and how to use the correct terminology, (e.g. ascenders and descenders)
- To put appropriate spaces between words;
- How to form upper- and lower-case letters;
- How to join letters correctly;
- How to write legibly in both joined and printed style;
- To use different styles of writing for different purposes;

- The importance of neat and clear presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively;
- To develop greater control and fluency as they become increasingly confident.

Read, Write Inc and Readiness for Writing

Formal handwriting skills will be taught regularly and systematically throughout school, from Reception to Year 4.

The stages the children follow are:

1. Readiness for writing: gross and fine motor skills leading to letter formation (Early Years)
2. Accurate letter formation using Read, Write Inc. 'patter' phrases (Reception and Year 1)
3. Pre-cursive letter formation ('from the line') (Year 2)
4. Securing joins (Year 3)
5. Practising speed and fluency (Year 3 and 4)

EYFS

- Fine and gross motor skills developed in both the indoor and outdoor environment, through both planned and child-initiated learning opportunities.
- Gross motor skills through climbing, crawling, jumping, balancing and using bikes.
- Fine motor skills are extended through manipulation of malleable materials such as play-dough through free exploration.
- Scissor skills and other activities requiring hand-eye co-ordination opportunities are readily available throughout the day.
- Fine motor resources offering a range of differentiated activities such as tweezing, twisting and folding are set up for children to access during child-initiated sessions.
- Daily intervention to support fine motor skills for those in need in Reception.
- Emergent writing opportunities during child initiated/adult led writing activities.
- Children are taught to begin forming letters, whether on pencil and paper or sky writing, by beginning at the correct starting point.
- Parents, carers and other childcare providers are given the appropriate rhymes to support letter and number formation at home.

By the end of EYFS, children will use the RWI 'patter' to support correct letter formation of the phonemes in which they are secure. Letter formation will be taught while sitting at tables to encourage good writing posture. Pencil grip will be modelled and corrected as appropriate. Early exposure to writing on lined paper will help to control the size and spacing of the letters and words they write.

Handwriting in EYFS is assessed in 2 ELGs: Physical Development and Literacy

Physical Development (Fine Motor)

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paintbrushes and cutlery
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

Literacy Development (Writing)

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed

- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

KS1

- In Year One a daily handwriting session of 10 minutes, focusing on forming the letter. Year One will only introduce pre-cursive in the summer term to specific children, where appropriate.
- In Year Two handwriting will be taught daily for 10 minutes alongside spelling activities. Year Two will be expected to practice pre-cursive, moving onto cursive when they are secure in their letter formation.

KS2

- All children to engage in a taught handwriting session once a week consolidating cursive script running alongside spelling activities (see spelling policy/year group scheme of work.)
- Once secure and fluently joining, handwriting sessions will run as and when appropriate.
- Additional handwriting will be taught within an intervention to those who still require it.

Pens

- From the summer term, all Year 4 children will be allowed to use a pen for all writing.
- In Year 4, Pens will be using in handwriting books from Spring term.
- Black Biro-style pens will be used.

Handwriting and Interventions

It is hoped that children work through the provision outlined above at the expected level of development. However, in some cases, children may need extra provision:

- 1:1, small groups or peer tutoring;
- Gross motor activities;
- Targeted letter formation;
- Pencil grips, special pencils or pens;
- 'Write from the start' Handwriting intervention program in place for any children who need extra support;
- External support such as occupational health may be needed in some cases.

Provision for left-handed children

Left handed children (approximately 10% of the population) are supported by being encouraged to:

- Sit with light coming from the right-hand side, to avoid working in the shadow of their hand;
- Have their work raised 30 degrees on a binder, to help them see over their hand more easily and so their arm and hand have more freedom of movement;
- Sit slightly to the right of the desk space so they have plenty of room to their left;
- Sit on the left-hand side of right-handed writers – to avoid their paper and elbows bumping;
- Not sit in a hunched or stiff way. Usually this happens because the paper position isn't right;
- Practice left-to-right exercises before writing left-to-right.

Letter Join Font

The agreed Letter Join font is installed on all school devices and is licenced for school use. Staff should ensure worksheets use the agreed font for formation practice; however, classroom displays may use a range of fonts to support environment print. Digital resources should be accessible (sufficient contrast and size) and printable on ruled paper where required.

Monitoring and Assessment

The expected high standards for handwriting should be the same across all books irrelevant of the subject. Teachers of all subjects will encourage correct handwriting and presentation within their lessons. Subject leaders will ensure handwriting expectations are included in subject non-negotiables or marking policies so handwriting is reinforced across the curriculum.

Handwriting will be formatively assessed termly by class teachers using a standardised checklist (letter formation, joins, spacing, slope, size consistency, pencil grip). English Subject Leader will undertake termly book scrutiny and a bi-annual moderated sample across year groups. Success will be measured by: % of pupils meeting age-related handwriting expectations, evidence of transferable handwriting in at least two non-English books, and reduction in pupils requiring targeted intervention. Outcomes will feed into appraisal and CPD planning.

This policy will be reviewed by the English Subject leader.

All children will have a 'best piece' of handwriting available in their English books for reference and on the class Non-Negotiables display.

Equal Opportunities and Race Equality Policy

All children regardless of their race, sex, religion, religious belief or ability will be given equal opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in Handwriting.

Where pupils have identified additional needs, class teachers and the SENCo will produce specific handwriting targets within individual plans (IEPs or provision maps), which may include adapted resources (wider-lined paper, slanted boards, grips), technology alternatives (voice-to-text or keyboarding skills), and agreed exam or classroom access arrangements. Occupational therapy recommendations will be recorded and followed up.

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the English Subject Leader and approved by the governing body. Annual monitoring outcomes will be reported to the Curriculum Committee and summarised in the Headteacher's report to governors.