



Handwriting Policy

Introduction

A child's ability to write with ease, speed and legibility enables them to communicate clearly. A difficulty with handwriting can limit fluency, the quality and quantity of ideas and have an adverse effect on spelling. In later years of schooling, a child will be required to have the ability to take notes. To do this, it is necessary to have a free-flowing hand that is legible.

The presentation of a child's work is also an important aspect of the whole production process and teacher expectations are of vital importance. The quality of work displayed reflects the standard of the class. However, handwriting is simply a tool to set down ideas; composition is the main consideration.

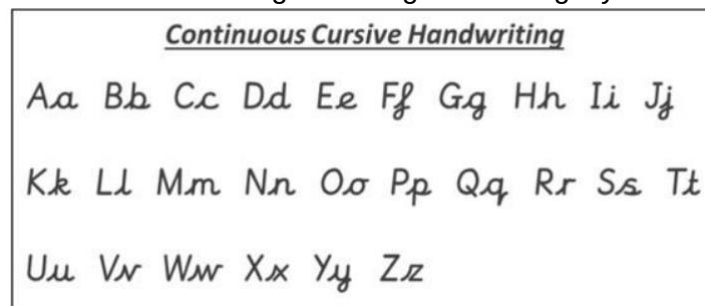
Aims

At Chalfont St Peter Infant School we aim to encourage the progression and development of each child's handwriting into a fluent, legible and neat style that will support their spelling and composition by:

- providing equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve success in handwriting
- producing clear, concise, legible handwriting in all areas of the curriculum
- developing accuracy and fluency
- helping children recognise that handwriting is a form of communication and as such should be considered important in order for it to be effective
- encouraging children to take pride in their work
- helping children recognise that handwriting is a life-long skill and will be a fundamental element of all forms of written communication throughout their lives
- adopting a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays/resources
- having a consistent whole school approach to the teaching of handwriting

Continuous Cursive Handwriting Key Features

Our school uses continuous cursive handwriting as our agreed writing style.



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- The handwriting style is known as 'Continuous Cursive Handwriting' which means each letter is formed without taking the pencil off the paper, so each word is formed in one fluid movement.
- There is a clear distinction between capital and lower-case letters.
- The continuous flow of writing ultimately improves speed, spelling and fluency.
- All letters 'lead in' from the line.
- The majority of letters finish on the line with a 'flick'.
- The pencil does not leave the paper until the word is complete.
- 'ts' and 'xs' are crossed and 'i's' are dotted when the whole word is complete.

Correct movement in shaping the letters is encouraged and practised regularly with descriptions of how letters are formed e.g. "I go down here, up here and round". The children are also taught to use spacing between words. Children also at this time begin to focus on ascenders and descenders.

Method and Content of Teaching

Handwriting in Reception:

In line with the most recent DfE's criteria, (April 2021 SSP programmes), at first, children should not be taught to join letters or to start every letter 'on the line' with a 'lead-in', because these practices cause unnecessary difficulty for beginners. Children may be taught simple exit strokes for letters that end 'on the line' (a, d, h, i, k, l, m, n, t, u). (All resources designed for children to read should be in print). Little Wandle letter formation practice sheets may be used by the children.

Reception children will be taught to:

- hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing, using the tripod grip in almost all cases - Fine Motor Skills ELG
- write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed – Writing ELG

In the early stages of handwriting development, children are introduced to activities to establish fine motor skills. Patterning, drawing and colouring helps establish the feeling of continuous flow and teaches the hands the most frequently used movements. Multi-sensory experiences ensure that the techniques are not only fun to learn, but that the skill is learnt effectively by pupils with a variety of learning styles. In each classroom there is a Fine Motor Area where fun challenges are set out to develop various fine motor skills such as eye hand coordination, or pincer grip e.g. using tweezers and pegs. Discrete handwriting sessions are completed with the adults in the classroom to support and develop children's letter formation and handwriting skills. These tie into Phonics sessions and letter formation is taught alongside the letter sounds. Opportunities for mark making are planned for inside and the outdoor areas. Children are offered a range of materials and experiences for mark making developed across all seven areas of learning. When teachers are modelling activities, they demonstrate and encourage a tripod pencil grip.

Handwriting in Key Stage 1:

In KS1, handwriting forms part of daily, early morning activities and is a focus in writing lessons. Letter formation and the objectives of the Key Stage 1 Programmes of Study are followed. Children use handwriting books, printed with lines as a guide, to support their handwriting. Teachers provide opportunities to demonstrate and reinforce correct letter formation, using a continuous cursive lead-in to the correct starting point for each letter. Capital letters are not joined because they do not start from the line. Extra intervention is offered to children who need further handwriting support.

Year 1 pupils will be taught to:

- sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
- begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place
- form capital letters
- form digits 0-9

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- understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these

Year 2 pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

Year 2 pupils should be taught to:

- form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another.
- start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined
- write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters
- use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters

Learning environment

It is important that chairs are high enough to allow the writer to see over their hand. Good lighting ensures that children are not writing in the shadow of their own hand. Children are taught to hold the pencil far enough from the point to allow them to see the written trace. Handwritten captions or messages for the children are written by teachers, from Year 1, in continuous cursive script.

Left handed children

Care is taken to accommodate the needs of the left-handed child, in particular to make sure there is sufficient space to his/her right side, which allows the paper to be placed in a comfortable position. This permits writers to have their hand below the line, in a non-inverted position, without interrupting their line of vision. They should sit on the outside of the table.

Assessment

There is no formal assessment of handwriting for Year R and Year 1 pupils; assessment is carried out on a continuous basis. In Year 2 handwriting is assessed as part of the children's writing using the teacher assessment exemplification: KS1 English writing.