Handwriting Policy

Based on the Improvement in School through Handwriting and Art (ISHA) programme by Martin Harvey and Debbie Watson.

Rationale

Handwriting is the explicit teaching of letter formation and joins. Effective handwriting supports achievement across the curriculum and contributes to pupils' confidence, independence and pride in presentation.

Aims

To develop a consistent approach to handwriting across the school; ensure all pupils form letters correctly; develop fluent, legible handwriting and promote high standards of presentation.

Good Habits for Handwriting

BBC – Bottom at the back of the chair.

TNT – Tummy near to the table.

Legs Set – four chair legs and two feet on the floor.

Pencil Grip – tripod grip.

Hands Set – one hand steadies the paper and one hand holds the pencil.

Handwriting Progression Overview

Phase	Focus	Key Milestones
EYFS Nursery	Squiggle Movement and Squiggle While You Wiggle	Gross motor development through repeated movement patterns.
EYFS Reception	Gross and fine motor development, pre-writing patterns and name writing	Correct posture, pencil control and printed letter formation.
Year 1	Letter families and pre-cursive exits	Secure lower case, capitals and number formation.
Year 2	Cursive joins	Consistent sizing and joins.
Years 3-4	Fluency and application	Automatic joins and presentation across the curriculum.
Years 5-6	Speed, stamina and adaptation	Legible personal style and purposeful presentation.

Nursery Progression

Autumn 1: Wiggle Me Into a Squiggle (weeks 1-6, one move per week).

Autumn 2: Wiggle Me Into a Squiggle (weeks 7-10) then Squiggle While You Wiggle 2.0 Move 1.

Spring 1: Moves 2-3.

Spring 2: Moves 4-5.

Summer 1: Moves 6-7.

Summer 2: Moves 8-9, each taught over approximately three weeks.

Year Group Expectations

Year Group	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Year 1	Letter families: Straight Line, Coat Hanger and Bridge	Revisit families, capitals and number formation	Complete Zig-Zag, Smile Pair and Misfits. Write first and last name in pre-cursive.
Year 2	Revision and first diagonal joins	Develop first joins with ascenders and descenders	Secure first joins and fluency
Year 3	Joins from ascenders	Joins to c, s and e	Horizontal joins and curriculum application
Year 4	Refine spacing and horizontal joins	Third joins and extended writing fluency	Fourth joins, capitals and consolidation
Year 5	Maintain legibility at speed	Adapt handwriting for purpose	Develop personal fluent style
Year 6	Efficient note taking and stamina	Presentation for SATs and transition	Independent choice of print or cursive style

Presentation Expectations

Teachers will model high standards. Dates and learning objectives should be neatly presented. Handwriting expectations apply across all curriculum areas.

Pen Licenses

UKS2 pupils may earn a pen license when handwriting is consistently fluent, joined, legible and presented to a high standard.

Pen Licence Expectations

The school operates a Pen Licence system to celebrate achievement in handwriting and presentation.
Pen licences may be awarded when a pupil consistently demonstrates:

- Fluent, joined handwriting.
- Correct formation and joins.
- Consistent sizing and spacing.

- High standards of presentation across subjects.
- Care and pride in their work.

Pen licences may be reviewed if presentation standards fall significantly below expectations; however, the process is intended primarily as a positive celebration of achievement.

Inclusion

Appropriate adaptations and support will be provided for pupils with SEND while maintaining high expectations.

Intervention and Support

Where pupils experience difficulties with handwriting development, additional support may be provided through targeted intervention, adapted resources, fine motor activities or individualised practice opportunities. Interventions may focus on gross motor development, fine motor control, pencil grip, letter formation, joins or writing fluency depending upon the identified need.

Handwriting Across the Curriculum

Handwriting is not taught in isolation but reinforced throughout the curriculum. Pupils are expected to apply the handwriting skills taught during discrete sessions in all areas of learning. Teachers will model high standards of presentation and provide regular opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their handwriting skills in meaningful contexts.

Left-Handed Writers

The school is committed to ensuring that left-handed pupils are supported effectively to develop fluent and legible handwriting. Approximately 10% of children are naturally left-handed and should never be encouraged to switch hands for writing.

Teachers will support left-handed pupils by:

- Seating them on the left-hand side of right-handed pupils where possible to avoid elbows colliding.
- Modelling letter formation from the pupil's perspective where appropriate.
- Encouraging the paper to be positioned slightly to the left of the body and tilted clockwise.
- Ensuring an appropriate tripod pencil grip.
- Encouraging pupils to hold the pencil approximately 2cm from the tip to allow clear visibility of their writing.
- Supporting pupils to develop a relaxed hand position below the writing line, reducing the likelihood of developing a hooked wrist position.
- Providing additional opportunities to practise joins where required.

Staff recognise that left-handed pupils may progress through handwriting development at different rates and will provide appropriate support whilst maintaining high expectations for presentation, fluency and legibility.

Developing Writing Stamina

As pupils progress through the school, increasing attention will be given to developing writing stamina. Opportunities for sustained writing will enable pupils to maintain consistent size, fluency, spacing and presentation over longer periods. This supports pupils in meeting the demands of the wider curriculum and prepares them for future educational stages.

Monitoring and Assessment

The implementation and impact of handwriting teaching will be monitored regularly by the English Subject Leader and Senior Leadership Team.

Monitoring activities may include:

- Learning walks and lesson observations.
- Book scrutiny across a range of subjects.
- Pupil voice discussions.
- Moderation of handwriting samples.
- Review of planning and curriculum coverage.
- Assessment of letter formation, sizing, joins, spacing and presentation.
- Analysis of outcomes for identified groups, including SEND, disadvantaged and left-handed pupils.

Teachers will assess handwriting as part of ongoing formative assessment. Teachers will assess progress against the agreed progression. Particular attention will be given to:

- Correct letter formation.
- Consistent letter size.
- Appropriate orientation of letters.
- Accurate joins.
- Spacing between words.
- Fluency and writing stamina.
- Presentation across the curriculum.

Assessment information will be used toidentify pupils requiring additional support or intervention and to inform future teaching.

Quality Assurance

The English Subject Leader will maintain a portfolio of moderated handwriting examples from EYFS to Year 6. This portfolio will provide exemplification of expected standards and support consistency of teacher assessment across the school.

Fonts for Resources

KS1: Twinkl and Twinkl Light. KS2: Twinkl Cursive Unlooped and Twinkl Cursive Unlooped Thin. Handwriting guidelines on slides should match those used in pupils' books.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the English Lead and Senior Leadership Team.