



## **Handwriting Policy**

**January 2020**

**Principal: Mrs L Jones**

**Chair of Governors: Mrs A Gadsden**

**Review Date: January 2023**

## Handwriting Policy - January 2020

This policy gives clear guidance to why and how we teach handwriting at Cranberry Academy. The focus on handwriting in the new National Curriculum is much greater, highlighting its importance in making the connection between a child's handwriting, their writing composition and spelling ability.

### Aims

- *To have a consistent cursive approach across the whole school to ensure high levels of presentation.*
- *To adopt a consistent approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays / resources.*
- *Children to achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting.*
- *Children to develop fluency and speed whilst writing, so that eventually the children are able to write the letters with confidence and correct orientation.*

### Teaching and Learning

As recommended by the British Dyslexia Association, we adopt a continuous cursive style of writing. Teachers and Learning Support Assistants model the agreed cursive style when modelling writing in class, on displays and when feeding back in books. Our agreed cursive style is as below:

Cursive Lower Case Letters



**Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS): Communication, language and literacy Curriculum**

**Expectations from the National**

**Nursery**

- *Holds pencil between thumb and two fingers, no longer using whole-hand grasp.*
- *Holds pencil near point between first two fingers and thumb and uses it with good control.*
- *Can copy some letters, e.g. letters from their name.*

**Reception**

- *Uses simple tools to effect changes to material.*
- *Handles tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control. Begins to form recognisable letters.*
- *Uses a pencil and holds it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.*

Children will be introduced to pre-cursive and cursive script during the early stages of writing. Children in the Foundation Stage will learn how to form letters in the cursive script. Although initially harder, research has shown that it is often difficult for children to change from printed to cursive script. Therefore, we will be teaching the children to form cursive letters from the earliest stages of mark making. Displays in both Nursery and Reception should include models of cursive script. Implements such as chunky triangular pencils, large chinks and chunky pens are used by pupils to rehearse skills on paper, chalk boards, pavement etc. Children will engage with many planned activities that focus on developing fine motor skills which will aid handwriting skills.

## **Key Stage 1 & Key Stage 2**

### **Expectations from the National Curriculum**

#### **Year 1**

- *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.*
- *Understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' and practise these.*

#### **Year 2**

- *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 unjoined.*
- *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.*

#### **Year 3/4**

- *Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined.*
- *Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting.*

#### **Year 5/6**

- *Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:*
- *Choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters.*
- *Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.*

Within KS1, each class will have at least 25 minutes per week to practise handwriting. Within KS2, 15 minutes per week must be dedicated to refining handwriting. In handwriting sessions, spellings, relevant key vocabulary or sentences/paragraphs related to core texts will be modelled by an adult then practised by children. Children across KS1 will have a dedicated handwriting book. Children who have been identified as having poor fine motor skills and poor handwriting will have further interventions to help address some of the issues. Teachers and teaching assistants must constantly address poor letter formation, handwriting and bad habits during all guided writing activities. If applicable marking should also address these. It is important to encourage children to focus on their best handwriting when writing their final draft in English. The child will find it easier to focus on the handwriting when they are not having to get their initial ideas down.

## **Posture**

Handwriting will not be correct if the child is not in the correct position for writing.

Chairs and desks within classrooms are matched to children's age and height. Children's backs should be straight and feet resting on the floor. A right-handed child should have their book slanted to the left. For a left-handed child the book should be slanted to the right. Always make sure that the hand which is not holding the pencil or pen holds the paper. If a child is left handed they should always be seated to the left of the table (additional handout of support available for left handed writers). Below shows the tripod grip hold that should be taught and used by all children.



## **Teaching formation**

### **Letter String (Families)**

All letters belong to a 'family' - where the formation is generally the same for each one. Learning these families together makes it easier for the children to remember how to form each one.

### **Letter Strings**

a, c, d, e, g, o, q, s—Letters with curves

i, l, t, z—Straight line letters

b, h, m, n, p, u—Tunnel letters

r, v, w, x—Top finishing letters

f, j, k, y—Hooks, loops and line letters

## **Implements**

Children will use handwriting books and paper with the four line system for positioning their letters writing in the middle lines with ascenders going up to the top line and descenders going down to the bottom line. Always encourage children to place their letters in the correct position on the single lined paper. To write Children use a standard HB pencil, well sharpened. The teacher will make a judgement when a child is ready to apply for their pen licence, the child will be meeting their year group objective for handwriting and will be consistently forming all letters correctly with correct

orientation and size. The child will then apply in writing (generic letter template) to the English lead to receive their pen licence, if eligible, the child will be presented with their pen licence and special handwriting pen in celebration assembly, as a way to celebrate their achievement but also encourage others. A pencil is always used within maths regardless of whether children have a pen licence.

## **Planning**

During handwriting sessions, children will apply taught formations to letters, words or parts of text relevant, where possible, to their current learning. For example, they may practise the letters from their current phonics focus, the letter strings used in their weekly spellings, key vocabulary related to topic, or use parts of a text being studied in English or Topic. There is no expectation that a formal plan will be constructed for handwriting. Books will be used as evidence for the progression of handwriting.

## **Resources**

'Boring Boring' software on all computers.

**Equal opportunities and Special needs**

Children with Special Educational needs, where necessary, will be provided with specialist equipment such as pencil grips or wider ruled lined paper. Children will also have the opportunity to use equipment to improve specific skills and fine motor skills on a more regular basis.

**Assessment, Monitoring and Moderation**

Children in the EYFS are assessed on an ongoing basis through observation, handwriting informs part of this. Within Key Stage One and Key Stage Two, handwriting is assessed as part of children's writing assessments on a six weekly basis. The progress of individuals handwriting and steps taken to improve it will be looked at through book scrutines.