All children make at least good progress; no underperforming cohorts or groups; all teachers enabling good or better learning; school becomes 'outstanding' by 2017

Handwriting and Presentation Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with English and Marking Policies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Written by</th>
<th>Linda Taylor (Literacy Coordinator)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ratified by Governors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date for Review</td>
<td>September 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signed-Chair of Governors</td>
<td>(Sue Trentini)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signed Principal</td>
<td>(Lee Hessey)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RATIONALE

At The Sir Donald Bailey Academy, we believe that neat, well-formed handwriting and presentation of written work helps to raise standards, as pupils take pride in, and have a sense of ownership of their work. As a school, we are adopting the fully cursive method of handwriting.

Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. If they have difficulty, this will limit fluency and inhibit the quality and quantity of their work. Automatic handwriting allows the writer to concentrate on composition. Our joined handwriting teaches pupils to join letters and words as a series of flowing movements and patterns. It improves spelling and can create success for all children. Neat handwriting raises self-esteem (especially of less able children). A high standard of presentation is uplifting for teachers.

AIMS

To develop a joined, confident handwriting style that is clear, legible and fluent, which will free the writer to write and not worry about letter formation.
To instil a positive attitude towards handwriting.

PROVISION

Handwriting is a movement skill, and one which is best taught directly by demonstration, explanation and practice. This is because the movements of the hand when writing, become firmly established in the movement memory when they are made often. This is why children need to practise handwriting movements correctly and often.

Handwriting and expected standards of presentation are taught as a whole class activity. In Years 1 and 2, handwriting is taught on a daily basis, usually outside of the English lesson, teaching correct formation for each letter. From Year 3 onwards, some additional lessons at the beginning of a term may be necessary. Some intensive teaching is recommended at the start of each school year to clarify expectations, with further reinforcement in weekly lessons. Handwriting may also be taught during phonics or spelling sessions. The teacher should act as a model when writing on the board or marking work, using the handwriting style used by our school. Writing in the school environment should also model expectations for handwriting and presentation.

Teachers should teach the agreed handwriting style (Appendix ‘A’) and they should address issues from assessment and observation. Attention to posture and seating arrangements is important. Children who write with their left hand face particular difficulties and teachers need to be aware of this. Left-handed children should either sit next to other left-handers or on the left side of a right-hander to avoid bumping arms or smudging work.
Children who display specific difficulties with handwriting will have these addressed through such interventions as rubber pencil grips, using alternative writing media etc. Individual cases may be referred to the SENCo where necessary.

Handwriting is a skill which needs to be taught explicitly. Since handwriting is essentially a movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed style by the teacher is very important; it is not sufficient to require pupils to copy models from a published scheme or worksheet. (See Appendix ‘B’ for the principles of teaching handwriting).

Consistency in the attitudes displayed, the methods employed and the models provided is the key to effective learning. A mixture of whole class, small group and individual teaching is planned.

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER:

To follow the school policy to help each child develop legible and fluent handwriting.
To provide direct teaching and accurate modelling.
To provide resources and an environment which promotes good handwriting.
To observe pupils, monitor progress and determine targets for development.

CONTINUITY AND PROGRESSION

FOUNDATION STAGE

The youngest children who are not yet ready to write need to be provided with a wide range of pre-writing activities and equipment. Children are provided with many opportunities to develop their hand muscles (e.g. playdough) and pencil control. They are frequently engaged in activities to improve their core balance, gross and fine motor control.

The first handwriting lessons are vital and the most important issue is to ensure that the children we teach, learn to form the letters of the alphabet with the correct sequence of strokes from the beginning. Children who have been allowed to invent their own ways of forming letters will find it harder to change, the longer they are allowed to persist. Unless these habits are ‘unlearned’ (often at great effort, since the movement memory is very retentive and will tend to revert to old habits) it will be impossible for them to learn a fluent, joined hand. The correct formation of all letters needs to become quite automatic and may require a lot of practice.

The emphasis at this stage is with movement rather than neatness. Letter formation (starting at the right entry point and then moving in the right direction) learned at this early stage becomes automatic and has a profound influence on later fluency and legibility. Pupils are to be taught to use lead-in strokes, following the agreed policy, as soon as they are ready for letter formation. (For agreed letter formation please see Appendix ‘A’).
To aid movement, close attention is given to pencil grip, correct posture, the positioning of the paper and the organisation of the writing space. Teachers are vigilant to ensure that bad habits do not become ingrained and that the specific needs of left-handed pupils (for example, additional tracking and tracing of letters at the pre-writing stage) and those with special educational needs are met. In the pre-communicative stage, pupils play with writing and these experiments are recognised and praised as an important stage in the child’s understanding that marks on paper convey meaning. Pupils are given the opportunity to experiment with a range of writing materials and implements; a multi-sensory approach is used to help pupils feel the movement in the hand.

**Teaching the correct formation of letters must be given highest priority**, and this should be achieved by pupils before any attempt is made at joining. Only ask the children to write the letter five or six times along the line, with ‘finger’ spaces between, until the formation and size is correct. The teacher will go around checking the letter and writing an example in the child’s book where necessary. The importance should be on **QUALITY not quantity**.

All classrooms in Foundation Stage should have a dedicated writing area. These should be equipped with a range of writing implements and materials.

**KEY STAGE 1**

Building on the foundation stage, pupils at Key Stage 1 develop a legible style and begin to use fully cursive handwriting by starting to join their letters. This is dependent on ability. Correct letter orientation, formation and proportion are taught in line with the school’s agreed handwriting style, on a daily basis. Pupils should be taught to sit correctly at the table, holding the pencil correctly. This continues in Year 2, ensuring that letters are an appropriate size and that spaces between words reflect the size of the letters. By the end of Year 2, pupils should also be able to correctly form capital letters that touch the bottom and the top of the line, but do not join other letters.

Continuing on from foundation, children should be asked to write five or six letters on the line, which should be checked before the child continues. This avoids them ‘learning’ an incorrect formation. After practising single letters, they should move on to joining two letters, then making words with three or more letters that have been covered. (They should only learn letter combinations that can be found in words).

**KEY STAGE TWO**

The target for children in Key Stage Two is to produce a fluent, consistently formed style of fully cursive handwriting with equal spacing between the letters and words.
The legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting should be increased by ensuring sufficient spacing and correctly formed ascenders and descenders.

ASSESSMENT

Teachers assess handwriting and presentation as part of their normal marking in line with the marking policy. They use this formative assessment to inform their further planning. A comment on handwriting or presentation should be written at the end of a piece of work as appropriate. When assessing writing during handwriting lessons, teachers should attempt to look at as many pieces of work as possible during the lesson, giving verbal feedback, to ensure that children are not learning ‘bad habits’.

MONITORING

Monitoring of handwriting and presentation comes under the main subject of English and is the responsibility of the English Co-ordinator. The Head and Governors will also monitor, as with other subjects and in accordance with the School Improvement Plan. Monitoring can take the form of lesson observations, sampling and moderation of work, data analysis and looking at teachers’ planning.

PRESENTATION

Children should be encouraged to take pride in their work and to use neat handwriting. In English, the date should be written in full (e.g. Monday 9th June 2015) and the title or learning objective should be written underneath. Sometimes, teachers may prefer to type this information out for the children, along with the success criteria, although every piece of work should be dated.
Handwriting - lower case letters

Every letter starts on the line.

Up, over, back, round: c o a d g q f

Up, down, round: i j l t u v w y

Up, down, up again: b h k m n p r

Other letters: e x z

Leave at the top: o r n w

t and x are crossed after the word is written.
BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR JOINED HANDWRITING

Each letter is approached from the line with a ‘lead in’ stroke, which goes to the beginning point of the letter.

The letter is written with one flowing movement. The ‘carry on’ stroke leaves the letter where it finishes, and is ready to become the approach stroke of the next letter. In most cases the carry on stroke leaves the line of writing, except for:

\[ \sigma, \, r, \, N, \, \text{ and } \mathfrak{w} \]

where it comes off the top of the letter and makes a bridge to the next one.

The letter x is crossed after the word is written, as is the letter t.

The alphabet is organised into stroke-related groups for easy teaching:

**The ‘c’ family:** c, o, a, d, q, q, f, s

It is very important that children form ‘c’ correctly, so that the other letters in the family are easy to form neatly.

From the line go up and round, **over the top and stop at ‘2 o’clock’**.

Back around the same path to stop at ‘5 o’clock’.

If ‘c’ is formed correctly, then the straight lines of a, d, q, q naturally join up with the ‘c’ as they go past.

The ‘o’ closes the circle on the ‘c’ and finishes at the top with a carry on ‘dip’.

Also go up, round, over the top and back. f is tall (touching the line above), whereas s is only half size - often children make it too tall.

**The ‘r’ family:** r, n, m, h, b, k, p

This family of letters goes ‘up, down and up again’ for the start of each one.

r stops with a small ‘dip’ near the top.
\(n, m, h\) all come straight down after ‘going over the bridge’ and then finish by going up slightly, with a ‘carry on line’. \(h\) is tall.

\(b, k, p\) also start ‘up, down and up again’.

\(p\) has the tail under the line \(p\).

\(b, k\) are tall, but the curly part of the \(k\) only goes up to half way.

The ‘i’ family:  \(i, j, l, t, u, v, w, y\)

These letters start ‘up, down and under’.

\(v\) and \(w\) finish at the top with a carry on ‘dip’. \(u\) MUST go back down to the line, to distinguish it from \(v\).

\(l, t, u, v, w, y\) also start ‘up, down’.

\(y\) has the tail under the line \(y\). \(l\) is tall. \(t\) is just short of the line above.

Other letters:  \(e, x, z\)

**COMMON ERRORS TO BE AWARE OF:**

When children learn to write the \(c\) they MUST go right round to ‘2 o’clock’ before going back. This ensures that, when going on to write \(a, d, g\) and \(q\), they can just go up to meet the line and down again.

Tall letters \((b, d, h, k, l, t)\) should be clearly taller and should touch the line above.
Some letters go under the line \( f, g, j, p, q \).

\( \mathfrak{u} \) and \( \mathfrak{v} \) are often confused. \( \mathfrak{u} \) goes right back down to the line.