

Handwriting and Presentation Policy 2020

Rationale

'In all the ways we express ourselves nonverbally, none is quite so personal as our handwriting.'

Betty Edwards – Author

At Tonge Moor Primary Academy we want to encourage all children to be confident writers. The teaching of handwriting is the central strategy in developing children's fluency in writing. They will develop all the key elements of letter formation and develop a fluent and legible style of writing. At Tonge Moor, every member of staff is accountable for teaching and promoting neat, cursive handwriting.

The general aims of teaching handwriting are to:

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

The school's expectations:

Teaching

- *There should be two 15-minute sessions per week based on the focus for that week, as identified on English plans.*
- Handwriting is to be completed at the front of English books.
- Teachers should use yellow highlighter to identify the best join in each practice.
- Teachers will use the Pen Pals document and progression map as a planning guide.
- Each session should begin with a handwriting 'warm up' which will develop children's fine motor skills.
- The sessions should be based on the focus for that week but could also include the spellings if appropriate.
- The chosen font should be used consistently on paperwork for children (such as marking grids and scaffolds), displays and PowerPoints used for delivering lessons.
- Displays should use a mixture of font types and a mixture of typed and written writing, *but should all model cursive, legible presentation.*

Model used:

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

(Twinkl pre-cursive)

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

(Twinkl cursive looped)

Techniques for teaching letter formation

- Model good handwriting all the time.
- Demonstrate.
- Talk through the process.
- Encourage children to verbalise the process.
- Children form letters in the air.
- Finger trace over tactile letters.
- Write over highlighter pen (or dotted letters).
- Draw round templates.
- Write in sand with finger or stick.
- Write with chalk on chalkboard.
- Form letters with beads in plasticine.
- Finger trace the outline of letters on the back of the person in front of you.

Getting ready to write

Seating and posture

- Chair and table should be at a comfortable height
- The table should support the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor
- Encourage children to sit up straight and not slouch
- The height of the chair should be such that the thighs are horizontal and feet flat on the floor
- Tables should be free of clutter
- Rooms should be well lit
- Left-handed pupils should sit on the left of their partners

Pencil grip

- Children should write with a pencil (or pen when introduced at the appropriate time) with a rounded nib. Pencils should be reasonably sharp.
- A tripod grip is the most efficient way of holding a pencil/ pen.
- Some children with specific difficulties may benefit from using a sloping surface and special equipment e.g. triangular pencil grip for a short period of time.

For right handers

- Hold lightly between the thumb and forefinger about 3cm away from the point.
- The paper should be placed to the right tilted slightly to the left.

- Use the left hand to steady the paper.

For left handers

- Hold lightly between thumb and forefinger resting on the first knuckle of the middle finger
- Hold about 3cm from the tip
- The hand should be kept below the writing line
- The paper should be tilted slightly to the right at about 20 - 30°
- Use the right hand to steady the paper

NB It is very important that a right-handed child is NOT seated on the left hand side of a left handed child as their elbows will collide.

Presentation

- Children will use a sharp, school pencil or blue, school pen if they have earned a pen licence.
- *Children in Year 2 who are achieving 'greater depth' in Writing by the Summer Term have an opportunity to use pens. Otherwise, children from Year 3 can begin earning a pen licence if they demonstrate a consistent use of neat, legible, and correctly formed handwriting across all subjects at all times. It is generally agreed that most children will have moved onto a pen by the age of nine after having a certain level of competence in writing with a pencil.*
- *Purple pens are used when an editing and improving lesson is being conducted, otherwise pencils or blue pens are used for editing, as correcting own writing should be part of the writing process.*
- Rulers must be used to underline dates and titles etc. and to cross out mistakes.
- Rubbers should not be encouraged as making mistakes and editing work is evidence of learning and progress and of perseverance. However, this is not relevant when writing out a final draft or a piece for display purposes.