

# Sandwood Primary School



## Handwriting Policy





## **SANDWOOD PRIMARY**

### **Handwriting Policy**

#### **AIM**

The children will be encouraged to develop a neat and efficient handwriting style that enables them to communicate effectively through writing.

#### **RATIONALE**

Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Given effective teaching, handwriting can be mastered by most pupils by the time they are seven or eight years old enabling them, with practice, to go on to develop a faster and more mature hand ready for secondary school and adult life.

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, but 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.

- Handwriting is to be kept high profile throughout the school.
- This is achieved through regular, valued handwriting sessions.
- Children will be taught handwriting in class situations.
- Handwriting will be actively demonstrated by the teacher.
- Primary 1 will practise handwriting in a range of contexts, but in addition to this will practise letter and number formation on a twice weekly basis

#### **FORMAL HANDWRITING LESSONS**

These will begin in P2, when it is assessed that the children are consistently forming letters correctly. This will be used to reinforce the work completed in the progression in phonics, and practising high frequency/common words to help reinforce the fact that these words need to be remembered as wholes. The emphasis is upon developing a fluent, readable style. When this has been achieved other possibilities will be explored. Children will write in pencil. Lessons should be daily and last between 10 and 15 minutes.

#### **GUIDELINES FOR TEACHING HANDWRITING**

- Prior to the beginning of the session the room needs to be organised accordingly. It is suggested that all children face the blackboard/ whiteboard/SMART boards.
- Correct posture with the child sitting comfortably with feet flat on the floor with body upright.
- The paper should be positioned to a comfortable angle and moved up as the page is filled.
- Adequate space is needed so that the children are able to write without their elbows touching.
- Correct light in order to see without eyestrain.
- Pencil grip should be firm but relaxed. The children need to be aware that they should not grip so that their hand aches but need to be able to apply some pressure.
- Handwriting sessions should be short and regular.

### **LINE AND JOTTER GUIDES**

In Handwriting sessions children will work in books ruled with lines. These will be introduced in P2.

P1 - Blank

P2, P3 – Red 15mm lined jotter (no margin)

P4 - Red 15mm lined jotter (children draw margin –when ready children should transfer to Yellow 8mm lined jotter with margin )

P5, P6, P7 – Yellow 8mm lined jotter (with margin)

All jotters should have the date written in words on the top line.

### **LEFT HAND PROVISION**

To ensure that left-handed children are not disadvantaged when writing a range of strategies will be employed. Letter formation and skywriting should also be completed with left hand to provide these children with a model. Left-handed children should sit on the left of right-handed children to ensure that their arms do not clash, and they should also be encouraged to tilt their work clockwise so they can see what they have written.

To avoid smudging their work, left-handed children should be encouraged to position their fingers about 1.5cm away from the end of their writing implement, and their wrist should be straight.

As writing from left to right is more difficult for left-handed children they should be supported to ensure that they do not learn bad habits of position, posture and pen hold which will deter them meeting the aim of developing a fast, fluent and legible handwriting style.

### **ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS**

Provision should be made for children with Additional Learning Needs. This will include individual/small group sessions at the appropriate level, use of pencil grips and opportunities to practise using a range of media.

### **PRIMARY 1**

- Activities to improve hand control, e.g. drawing, painting, colouring, modelling material, cutting, sticking, construction, lacing etc.
- Develop the fine and gross motor skills needed for handwriting as part of the Early Years curriculum.
- Use a comfortable and efficient pencil grip.
- Begin a drawing programme and continue development of it.
- Write letters using the correct sequence of movements (Consistent letter formation and appropriate spacing Use letter tracks if necessary )
- Practise letter formation in a range of contexts.

### **PRIMARY 2 & 3**

- Use a comfortable and efficient pencil grip.
- Write letters using the correct sequence of movements.
- Develop the fine and gross motor skills needed for handwriting as part of the Early Years curriculum.
- Practise letter formation in a range of contexts.
- Movement of each of the four letter families – ie long ladders, one armed robots, curly caterpillars, zig-zag letters

*Long Ladders (down and off in another direction) – l, i, j, t, u, y*

*One armed robots (down and retrace upwards) – b, h, k, m, n, p, r*

*Curly Caterpillars (anti-clockwise round)– c, a, d, e, g, o, q, f, s*

*ZigZag letters – v, w, x, z*

#### **PRIMARY 4**

- Movement of each of the four letter families – ie long ladders, one armed robots, curly caterpillars, zig-zag letters –

*Long Ladders (down and off in another direction) – l, i, j, t, u, y*

*One armed robots (down and retrace upwards) – b, h, k, m, n, p, r*

*Curly Caterpillars (anti-clockwise round)– c, a, d, e, g, o, q, f, s*

*Zig Zag letters – v, w, x, z*

- Revisit all letters, in their appropriate families to reinforce and practise formation.
- Baseline joins *in, un, um, am, ine, ime, an, ar, aw, ir, hu, ti, ki, du,*
- Baseline joins *ey, ay, ip, up, it, nt, ent, ant, ill, all, ib, if, ub, th, ck, ch*
- Practise joining High Frequency words.

#### **PRIMARY 5**

- Practise handwriting patterns
- Baseline joins *in, un, um, am, ine, ime, an, ar, aw, ir, hu, ti, ki, du,*
- Baseline joins *ey, ay, ip, up, it, nt, ent, ant, ill, all, ib, if, ub, th, ck, ch*
- Practise joining High Frequency words.
- Use and practise the basic handwriting joins
- Practise handwriting in conjunction with spelling patterns.
- Use the basic handwriting joins with confidence and use them in independent writing.
- Focus with diagonal joins, first to the letters without ascenders then those with.
- Apply these skills to independent writing.
- Introduce horizontal joins (top joins), first to letters without ascenders and then those with: *op,*

#### **PRIMARY 6**

- Practise correct formation of basic joins *in, un, um, am, ine, ime, an, ar, aw, ir, hu, ti, ki, du, ey, ay, ip, up, it, nt, ent, ant, ill, all, ib, if, ub, th, ck, ch*
- Diagonal joins, first to the letters without ascenders then those with.
- Horizontal joins (top joins), first to letters without ascenders and then those with: *op, ou, ow, ov, ri, ru, ve, we, re, fe, fu, fi, ob, ol, wh, rk, rt, ot, of, fl, ft*
- Ensure consistency in size and proportion of letters and the spacing between letters and words.
- Build up handwriting speed, fluency and legibility.
- Practise and consolidate the joins
- Use a joined script in independent writing to enable building a fluent and clear style.

#### **PRIMARY 7**

- Use joined handwriting for all writing, except where other forms are required.
- To know when to use: A clear neat hand for finished, presentation work. Informal writing for everyday informal work.
- Ensure consistency in size and proportions of letters and spacing between letters and words.
- Build up speed and use a range of presentation skills
- Build upon work from P6 and use a variety of presentation methods through literacy lessons. Use and practise the known joins,
- More complicated anti-clockwise joins *ac, ca, da, ha, ad, ag, ea, ed, va, wa, oa, oo, od, fa, fo*
- Reinforce previous work, especially considering the spacing of letters, consistent spacing and size, distinguishing ascenders and descenders, reinforcing that the capital letter is not joined and analysis of writing style and presentation.