

Handwriting Policy – September 2017



Article 3- The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all actions concerning children.

Article 12 – Every child has the right to say what they think in all matters.

Article 28 – Every child has the right to an education.

Article 29 – Every child has the right to develop their personality, talents and abilities.

“Handwriting is a tool that has to work. It must be comfortable, fast and legible.” Angela Webb, Chair, National Handwriting Association

Aims

At Springfield, our aim is that pupils will be supported to develop a handwriting style which is clear, joined and fluid. Children will be encouraged to take pride in their written work, but also to be aware that different degrees of neatness may be appropriate for different tasks. They should be helped to see that there is a balance between speed and legibility which is dependent on the purpose of writing: the product, or the final draft of a piece of writing, needing the greatest attention to handwriting skills.

Although there are many opportunities to practice handwriting across the curriculum, we will also provide regular lessons for teaching and revising these skills. The frequency and length of these lessons will vary according to the age and competence of the children. Each year group must teach at least 1 formal handwriting session a week. EYFS incorporate handwriting into formal phonics teaching and physical development activities daily.

Four stages are identified and these form the basic organisation of our handwriting scheme:

1. Readiness for writing: gross and fine motor skills leading to letter formation (Foundation)
2. Beginning to join (Lower KS1)
3. Securing joins (Upper KS1)
4. Practising speed and fluency (Upper KS1)

Whilst these guidelines are recommendations as a school we recognise that children develop and learn at different rates and will be taught what is appropriate to their ability. Therefore we believe that children are taught according to their stage, not age.

Throughout all stages there will be clear opportunities for linking handwriting with early phonics and spelling work.

(Article 29: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full).

Handwriting in the EYFS

Handwriting in Reception is taught through the areas of Physical Development – Moving and Handling, and Literacy – Writing.

The Moving and Handling Early Learning Goal states that by the end of Reception most children should be able to:

Show good control and co-ordination in large and small movements. They move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space. They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing.

The Writing Early Learning Goal states that by the end of Reception most children should be able to:

Children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

Children should be taught to:

- how to hold a pencil/pen;
- print and form letters and digits 0-9;
- write from 'Left to right' across a page;
- leave a space between words.

- begin to form capital letters.

This is taught through a range of strategies including:

- Mark making in foam, sand, paint etc.
- Developing a comfortable pencil grip (“Froggy grip” – Tripod grip)
- How to hold a pencil to form recognisable letters
- Letter formation linked to daily phonics practise (Jolly Phonics/Letters & Sounds)
- Joining of digraphs and trigraphs when learning
- By the Summer Term, those that are able to begin to write on – lines
- Exercises to warm and strengthen muscles ready for writing
- Key word practise and joining of key words
- A range of independent writing activities to develop these skills at an age-appropriate level

Children learn best when they are **encouraged to become independent learners.** (Article 29)

Handwriting in Year 1

Children should be taught to:

- 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’ (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.

“Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the writing implement (pencil, pen) should not be too large for a young pupil’s hand. Whatever is being used should allow the pupil to hold it easily and correctly so that bad habits are avoided. Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs” – National Curriculum, Sept 2013

This is taught through a range of strategies including:

- Specific handwriting lessons
- Opportunities for independent writing
- Developing strength and stamina during writing activities
- Letter formation linked to daily phonics practise (Jolly Phonics/Letters & Sounds)
- Joining of key words and spellings

Children learn best when **a variety of teaching techniques, strategies and contexts are used appropriately** (Article 28)

Handwriting in Year 2

Children should be taught to:

- 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.

By end of Year 2 most children will be able to join.

“Pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation”. – National Curriculum, Sept 2013.

Opportunities will be provided for all children to develop their independent writing and practise their handwriting skills in a self-initiated and secure environment.

Children learn best when they **know why they are doing something and taking responsibility for their own learning** (Article 12)

Children learn best when **they have opportunities to apply learning in a variety of situations** (Article 29)

Provision for left-handed children

At least 10% of the population are left-handed. All teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and should make appropriate provision:

- pupils are encouraged to turn their paper not their hands;
- pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side;
- left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space;
- extra practice with left-to-right exercises may be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.

Teachers are aware of the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Teachers demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

Capital letters

Capital letters stand alone and are not joined to the next letter. Children must practice starting sentences and writing names using a capital letter and not joining the subsequent letter. This should be modelled by the teacher during Literacy and Phonics sessions.

Inclusion

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and teachers of children, whose handwriting is limited, by problems with fine motor skills, should liaise with the Inclusion Manager to develop a programme designed for the individual child and provide intervention.

Modelling

Teachers will model handwriting when writing on interactive whiteboards, writing on the class whiteboard, when working in groups on handheld whiteboards, when marking books and in variety of other situations where handwriting occurs in the classroom. We also believe that while this is modelled it will not be the only exclusive form of writing script shown to the children; as in life, children will be exposed to a variety of different handwriting styles and text fonts and should become

accustomed to seeing this variety. Hand written script can be used when displaying children's work in the classroom.

Resources

KS1 handwriting books, guidance on which letters to join, letter formation pictures and work mats can be found in the Handwriting folder on the 'T' drive.

Pencil grips and finger spacers can be used to support children.

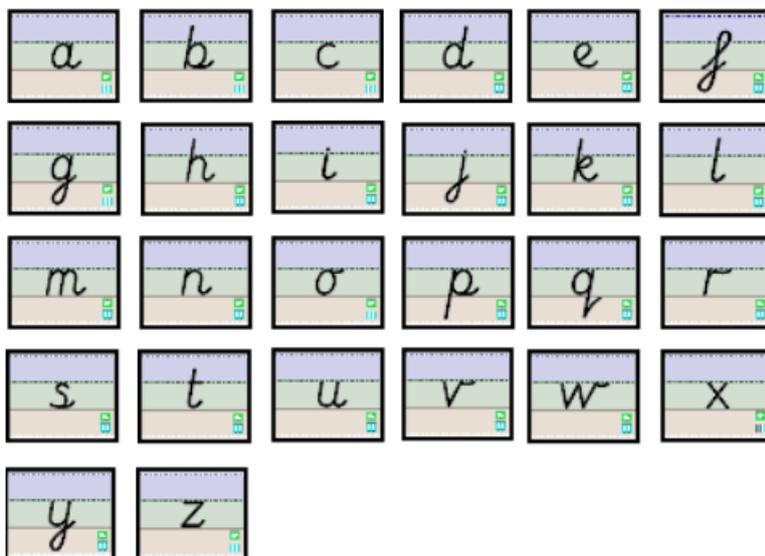
Suggested fonts to support joining:

- HFW cursive
- *Lucida handwriting*
- Sassoon primary infant

Handwriting pens will be used in literacy books, topic books and for independent writing. Pencil will be used in maths books.

Our school uses the 'Writing Wizard' App.

This link provides videos to help teach letter formation and joining
<http://www.teachhandwriting.co.uk/index.html>



“Tell me and I’ll forget; show me and I may remember; involve me and I’ll understand. “ *Chinese proverb*