



Holyoakes Field First School

Handwriting & Presentation Policy

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Approved by LGB: March 2023

Date of next review: March 2025



Rationale

Pride in presentation is a very important value to foster. How work is presented and displayed as well as the level of care and attention taken in books will act as a key indicator of our expectations for presentation and handwriting across the school.

The importance of handwriting cannot be underestimated. The COVID 19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns impacted on some pupils fine and gross motor skills and resulted in delayed physical development and coordination skills. Whilst good oracy skills are an important pre-cursor to pupils being able to articulate themselves in writing, developing a fluent handwriting style is also very important.

Aims of this policy

- To maintain high standards of presentation across all areas of the curriculum.
- To ensure a consistent and informed approach to the teaching of handwriting.
- To outline whole school expectations for handwriting and presentation, including how it is modelled by adults when writing in pupil's books, on whiteboards, labelling or on displays.

Intent

- For pupils to experience a coherent approach to the teaching and learning of handwriting (including number formation).
- For pupils to understand the importance of clear and neat handwriting in order to communicate meaning clearly.
- For pupils to take pride in the presentation of their work and handwriting.
- For pupils to be able to develop a neat, fluent and legible style of handwriting so that longer term, they can concentrate on composition and content and write quickly, creatively and imaginatively across all areas of the curriculum.

Implementation

Handwriting is a skill that needs to be taught explicitly. Correct modelling of the agreed style by all staff is very important. Letter formation and handwriting should be taught through regular short focused sessions to prevent 'bad-habits' and incorrect letter and number formation. Handwriting lessons can be usefully linked with spelling, grammar and phonics teaching.

Intensive teaching is recommended at the start of each school year to clarify expectations, with further reinforcement through short, regular sessions throughout the week (depending on the age of pupils). Formal and discrete teaching of handwriting skills should be carried out regularly and systematically to ensure that handwriting difficulties do not become a barrier to writing. Handwriting sessions should increase or decrease in frequency during the term depending on the age, stage of development and individual needs of pupils.

Staff should monitor pupils handwriting closely during these sessions so that any errors in formation can be corrected early before they become a habit. Capital letters stand alone and are not joined to the next letter. Wide or narrow lines are used



according to the pupils age and stage of development. Expectations for presentation such as the use of margins, dates, underlined headings and how to cross out with one straight line, should be shared with pupils as they progress through school.

Attention to posture and seating is equally important. Developing good posture is as important as developing a good pencil grip. Correct posture should be modelled and checked frequently. Staff should ensure pupils:

- Hold their pencils correctly (tripod grip)
- Place their feet flat on the floor
- Are sitting with their bottoms pushed into the back of their chairs.
- Have a direct view of the teacher/board/screen
- Use their non-writing hand to steady the paper or book and bear some body weight
- Have the paper or book slightly tilted

EYFS

Staff should plan several daily sessions (10-15 minutes in length) which develop core muscle strength. These should be spread out throughout the day so that there is a consistent focus on developing and enhancing gross and fine motor skills. This should be in addition to a focus on name writing and letter formation taught alongside the phonics programme.

KS1

Formal handwriting should continue to be taught with daily activities (15–30-minute sessions) that support correct letter and number formation. In addition, a continued focus on gross and fine motor skills exercises should be maintained, particularly where individual pupils require additional support. Pupils should be given regular, short dictation exercises to further develop their writing skills. Staff should use their professional judgement in determining when pupils are introduced to the basic joins. However, correct letter formation and developing a legible style should precede learning to join.

KS2

Handwriting will continue to be taught but the frequency and nature of tasks will depend on the needs of the pupils. Once pupils develop a fluent and efficient style of handwriting, they should be provided with frequent opportunities to showcase the expected standards of handwriting. Dictation exercises should also be used to teach note taking and encourage speedy handwriting. All pupils will write in pencil until they can demonstrate that they are joining competently and consistently. Pupils will receive a 'pen license' when staff deem that a pupil is ready.

Presentation

Staff should focus on the following guidelines to ensure consistency, considering the age and individual needs of pupils where necessary. Children should be expected to keep their books well-presented and not 'doodle' on the front or inside covers.



The colour, size and layout of subject books will be specified so that there is consistency in each phase. Printed labels should be used for all exercise books. Book labels will be prepared by the admin team and will include pupils full name, class and subject.

All diagrams should be produced using pencil and coloured using pencil crayons. Felt pens and wax crayons should not be used in exercise books. Teacher should expect the same, high standard of presentation across all books, including jotters. Pupils should be reminded to check for spaces and avoid missing pages. Any errors should be crossed out using a single line drawn with a ruler. Sticking worksheets into books should be kept to a minimum and should not obstruct the flow of writing. Pupils should be encouraged to write across the page rather than squeezing writing into small spaces. Pupils should be taught to stick neatly, without excessive use of glue (e.g. a dab of glue in each corner). Careful consideration should be given to the use of writing frames and worksheets. Some commercially produced resources can limit or restrict how pupils record. Younger pupils need consistency in how they are expected to set out work (e.g. recording numerals).

Equality and Inclusion

The expectation is that most pupils will develop a comfortable and efficient pencil grip, enabling them to write legibly and fluently. Pupils that experience difficulties with various aspects of handwriting should have extra support which targets these specific difficulties. The SENDCO may need to be consulted in order to devise a more specific programme of support. Chunky or triangular pencils, pencil grips and wider lines may be used. Other considerations might be room layout, seating position and posture, lighting and the use of aids such as writing slopes.

Left-handed writers

All teachers need to be aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision.

- Make sure that left-handed writers sit on the left of right-handed writers to prevent their writing arms from clashing.
- Put a mark on the left-hand side of the page to indicate where writing begins as some left-handed writers mirror-write from the right.
- Left-handed writers usually need to have their paper slightly to the left of centre of their body and should be encouraged to tilt their work clockwise so they can see what they have written.
- Be alert to the fact that it is difficult for left-handed writers to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Writing may therefore need to be modelled on an individual or small group basis.

Parents and carers

Parents should be encouraged to support their children to produce their best handwriting. As well as demonstrating and sharing examples of correct formation, the progression from initial letter formation to joins should be shared with families so this can be reinforced at home when completing homework tasks.



Impact & assessment

Research has found that regular, short handwriting tasks with appropriate feedback and praise, can help build confidence and eradicate bad habits such as a faulty pencil grip, incorrect letter formation letter reversals as well as poor posture and positioning.

In the early stages of handwriting, staff will observe closely to ensure letters are correctly formed and intervene appropriately. Later assessments may include the following:

- Is writing legible and generally presentable?
- Are letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
- Are ascenders and descenders clear and proportionate to the associated letter?
- Are joins correctly made?
- Are spaces between letters, words and lines appropriate?
- Is the size of writing consistent and appropriate?

Monitoring

Senior leaders will maintain a focus on the standards of handwriting and presentation. This will be carried out during book looks and subject leader monitoring.