

CAWOOD CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL



Handwriting Policy

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Website, Server			

Intent:

At Cawood, the importance of children being able to write legibly, fluently and at a reasonable speed is recognised. With these skills, children have a much greater chance of being able to reach and demonstrate their true potential throughout their school careers and in their lives beyond school.

By the end of Key Stage 2 all pupils should have the ability to produce fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy joined-up handwriting, and to understand the different forms of handwriting used for different purposes. Our intention is to make handwriting an automatic process that does not interfere with creative and mental thinking.

Our Aims are:

- To develop a neat, legible, speedy handwriting style using continuous cursive letters, which leads to producing letters and words automatically in independent writing.
- To establish and maintain high expectations for the presentation of written work.
- For pupils to understand, by the end of Year 6, the importance of neat presentation and the need for different letterforms (cursive, printed or capital letters) to help communicate meaning clearly

Implementation:

- To ensure consistency handwriting is based on a cursive script from 'The Handwriting File.' Blended alongside this programme is the use of the Read Write Inc handwriting materials in EYFS and KS1 to give additional visual, auditory and kinaesthetic support.
- In order for children to achieve a high standard of handwriting, they need to be explicitly taught the skills that are needed.
- Handwriting and expected standards of presentation should be taught as a whole class activity. Intensive teaching is recommended at the start of each school year to clarify expectations, with further reinforcement in lessons. The amount of time will also vary between classes as children become more skilled in formation in KS2. Short, focused lesson should be taught.

- Each handwriting session will include warm up activities to help gross and fine motor skills. Children should also be allowed to practise a particular set of letters, simply concentrating on developing accuracy, fluency and speed without the distraction of composing text.
- In KS1 handwriting books are used with appropriate handwriting lines. In KS2 handwriting books and/or sheets from the handwriting file will be used after explicit teaching.

During EYFS:

- Carefully planned pre-writing activities are used to develop gross and fine motor skills through continuous and enhanced provision as well as explicit and carefully modelled teaching.
- A weekly session of 'dough disco' is planned to develop fine motor skill exercises, to improve brain and muscle development.
- Multi-sensory methods and materials, (including tracing on different textures, children's wipe boards and sand for example) are used to support the child's development.
- Children are taught to use a comfortable and effective tripod pencil grip. We use triangular pencils and pencil grips when appropriate. The phrase 1. Nip, 2. Flip, 3, Grip is used to support the tripod pencil grip.

Letter formation

- IN EYFS1, children are introduced to the RWI initial letters and the mnemonics – memory pictures are used to help children visualise the letter
- Letters are modelled and children are encouraged to use the correct letter formation. This is also shared with parents/carers to support correct handwriting formation.
- In EYFS2 the letter formation is taught when new sounds are introduced and is a daily part of the RWI lesson so that children build up their handwriting skills daily.
- We make the *physical* process of writing – handwriting – enjoyable from the start, so children see themselves as 'writers'.
- Children need to practise handwriting under the guidance of a teacher so they do not develop habits that will be difficult to undo later
- There are three handwriting stages. (please refer to the RWI support materials)
- **Stage 1** -These lessons are taught while children read the Red, Green, Purple, Pink and Orange Storybooks (reception)
- Stage 1a: Children practise correct letter formation.
- Stage 1b: Children learn where to place the letters on the writing line.
- We teach the correct posture when formally teaching handwriting during the RWI lesson, sitting pupils at tables and writing with pencils and paper. (refer to the RWI handwriting support materials.

Handwriting position

feet flat on the floor
 bottom at the back of the chair
 body one fist from the table
 shoulders down and relaxed
 back leaning forward slightly
 left/right hand holding the page
 left/right hand ready in a tripod grip.

Example of how children are taught letter formation taken from RWI Phonics Handwriting Stage 1a.

Stage 1a – letter formation

- 'Around' letters: **c a o d g q**
- 'Down' letters: **l t b p k h i j m n r u y**
- 'Curly' letters: **e f s**
- 'Zigzag' letters: **v w z x**.



Checklist: girl

- ✓ start at her hair bobble on top of her head
- ✓ draw a nice round face
- ✓ go back up to her bobble
- ✓ down her very straight hair
- ✓ draw a round curl to finish

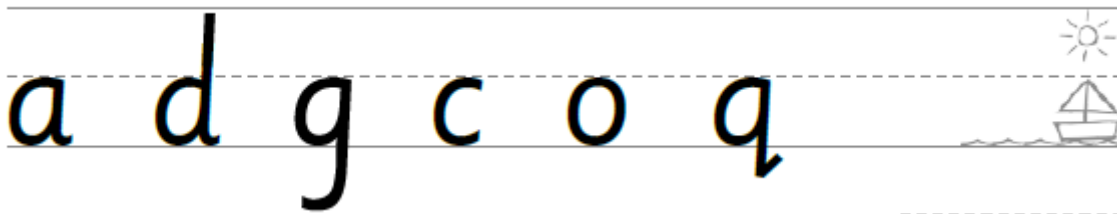


Checklist: dinosaur

- ✓ draw a big round bottom
- ✓ up the tall neck
- ✓ down the straight line to the feet
- ✓ draw a curl for the feet

- In the summer term -*Term 6* – Start RWI Phonics Stage 1b booklet with a focus on controlling the size of the letters. Start introducing additional lines and visual prompts when writing e.g sun, boat, water (see Stage 1b example below)

Example of visual prompts to support letter size taken from RWI Phonics Handwriting Stage 1b.

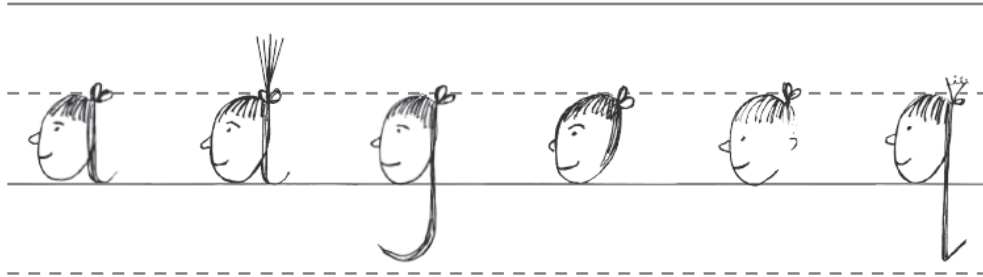


From Year One Pupils are taught:

- The pre cursive script from the handwriting file, but continued to be supported with the RWI materials (the RWI Stage 1 vocabulary and the introduction of stage 2 letter families)
- In addition, children are taught letter formation starting with a 'swoosh' and finishing with a flick, so all letters start in the same place on the line. This will lead to a mature style of writing and eventually to joined up handwriting. Children will also be taught looped descenders.
- 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 correctly
- 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. This should be linked with the RWI families.

- Towards the summer term we start two basic joins - the arm join (diagonal) and the washing line join (horizontal) and the variables for each join.

Example of letter family – The six sisters



Pupils in Year Two are 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.
- The RWI Phonics Handwriting Stage 3 booklet should be used as support – Use visual prompts and additional lines to support all children to control size of the letters. The joins should be taught in the following sequence:
 1. arm to boat joins
 2. arm to sun
 3. arm to sister
 4. washing line to boat
 5. washing line to sun
 6. washing line to sister

Example of letter joins taken from RWI Phonics Handwriting Stage 3 booklet.




Explain to children that there are two basic joins:

- the arm join (diagonal)
- the washing line join (horizontal).

The arm join has three variations:

- a. arm to boat 
- b. arm to sun 
- c. arm to sister. 

The washing line join has three variations:

- d. washing line to boat 
- e. washing line to sun 
- f. washing line to sister. 

Pupils in Year Three and Four are taught to:

- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined.
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting [for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.
- Continue to support the children by using the RWI letter formation language when appropriate until the children are secure in joining up letters.

Pupils in Year Five and Six are taught to:

- Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:
- Choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters
- Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

Pens are introduced from Year three when the child demonstrates an appropriate legible style of handwriting. Children are encouraged to use pens more frequently in Years Five and Six. We do not use biro or ink erasers. Children who reach this standard are presented with a certificate and can use a pen freely in the classroom during suitable activities.

Children are encouraged to have correct posture when writing (please refer to guidance in Handwriting File). We use the phrases BBC (bottom back in chair) and TNT (tummy near table) to remind children of the sitting position. We recognise that left-handers may have difficulty with handwriting, because the movements required have been developed by right-handers.

Children are taught to cross out mistakes neatly so that the appearance of their work is not spoilt.

As a result of this, we help the left-handed children in our classes by paying attention to the following points:

Position

Left-handed children should be away from another child's writing hand. The left hander needs to be distanced from the paper by sitting in the right hand half of his or hers writing space.

Movements

The left-hander pushes, as opposed to 'drawing,' the pencil across, therefore it is helpful for the child if the paper is positioned at an angle.

Pencil

We use triangular soft leaded pencils to help the writing flow for all children. Due to the nature of the writing movement hard, sharp pencils impede the flow and are particularly counter-productive for left-handed children. Due to this, we endeavour to ensure that all left-handers use pencils without sharp points.

We teach the correct pencil grip, by ensuring the pencil is held between the thumb and index finger, with the pencil resting on the middle finger. With left handed children we encourage a grip, which is higher up the shaft and with the pencil pointing higher up.

Observation of children is an integral part of assessment. Observation is also used diagnostically to establish whether a child needs help with particular letters, families of letters or kinds of joins etc.

As children get older we help them to realise that there are different types of handwriting which may be used according to the task and the audience for e.g.

- A fast hand for personal use e.g. note taking.
- A hand for normal use in school and daily life which is easily legible for others.
- A calligraphic hand for special occasions e.g. displays.
- An unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form.

Aa Bb Cc Dd

Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii

Jj Kk Ll Mm

Nn Oo Pp Qq

Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv

Ww Xx Yy Zz

Expectations

All teaching staff are encouraged to model the cursive style in all their handwriting, whether on whiteboards, working displays or in pupils' books. Pupils should experience coherence and continuity in the learning and teaching of handwriting across all school years and be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work.