

**Pinders Primary School Handwriting Policy.**

**November 2019**

At Pinders Primary School, we aim to equip all children with the ability to produce legible and fluent handwriting. Handwriting is a complex skill, which involves using a range of cognitive, linguistic and motor skills. It is a skill that is rarely acquired spontaneously and must be practised in order to meet requirements. We believe that children’s self-esteem and pride in their work can be raised by good quality presentation. The purpose of this policy is to set out a whole school approach to the teaching of handwriting.

Within the National Curriculum (2014), an emphasis has been placed on the acquisition of fluent and legible handwriting. In order to allow all children the opportunity to access quality handwriting sessions, a consistent approach to teaching is provided across school.

*Consistency* is a key word.

*Consistency* in terms of the handwriting style and letter shapes being taught.

*Consistency* in terms of how handwriting lessons are taught.

*Consistency* in terms of the way teaching materials and writing tools are used.

Consistency in terms of the teaching language which is used.

(Martin Harvey)

**Whole School objectives:**

1. Develop within all pupils a legible style of handwriting

2. Consistency in the shape and size of letters.

3. Flow and movement of writing is fluent and smooth.

4. Handwriting expectations are adhered to across the curriculum.

6. Raise children’s self-motivation and esteem through the establishment of best handwriting practice.

7. Establish and maintain a high profile of handwriting and presentation skills by displaying and rewarding work that meets the standard as well as that which shows rapid improvement.

**Martin Harvey Handwriting Scheme:**

In order to maintain high standards of presentation, handwriting must be taught at least 3 times a week, for a minimum of 15 minutes per session. New members of staff need a thorough induction to the teaching of handwriting, observing colleagues teach and a copy of the Excellence in Handwriting booklet.

**Expectations for teaching a handwriting session:**

**Tools - Pencil and Pens**

• Use a good quality HB handwriting pencil. Ensure it is always sharp and is not too short

• A variety of good quality pencils and pens to be used when children are ready

• Pens can be introduced as the handwriting improves at any age as a motivation to earn the privilege (Examples of pencil and pen licence can be found within the appendixes)

• Competent writers can use pens for writing tasks unless pencil is preferred

• Pens can be used for display handwriting (as appropriate)

**Grip**

• The tripod grip of the writing tool is recommended.

• The pencil should not be gripped hard, or pressed on to the paper heavily.

**Paper**

• During handwriting practise, children should be using the most appropriate line guide and for their handwriting stage.

• Children in KS2 should have lots of opportunities to practice using a line guide below plain paper, particularly for display.

**Modelling**

• The teacher should use modelling of both right and left handed movements and vocalise the size, shape and movement of the pencil

• Children should be encouraged to use self and peer assessment.

• Particular children’s work can be examined as a model using the visualiser.

• The teacher should tour the classroom during exercises to ‘see’ and comment on everyone’s work assisting individuals as needed.

 • Small guided groups should happen as part of regular practise to support children who need more support or extension.

**Handwriting position**

• Insist on a correct, balanced seating position.

• Two hands to be used at all times.

• 6 feet on the floor, the chair’s and yours.

• BBC ( bottom in the back of the chair), TNT (tummy near the table), 6 feet (4 chair legs and two feet on the floor) , 2 hands (one hand used to write the other hand used to hold the paper in place).

As outlined within the Martin Harvey scheme of handwriting, there are occasions when writing tasks or handwritten levels of expectation can vary for both adults and children, these are explained below.

**Three levels of presentation for children:**

 1. Highest level of presentation. The teacher says to the class, “This Science investigation we have just finished, we are going to write up beautifully with written explanations in your finest handwriting, well-constructed tables of results and carefully drawn diagrams. We are going to use plain paper of various sizes and line guides. I want you to feel really proud of your completed work and I want you to make your teacher very proud. I have a big, empty display board waiting for your work.”

 2. Lowest level of presentation. eg. Children are working in small groups with large sheets of sugar paper and marker pens. Teacher says, “You have two minutes to write a superb sentence about the way the bare tree across the playground is moving in the January breeze.” Children are writing at speed, inserting extra words to improve their sentence and perhaps crossing out. Presentation does not matter at all in this type of task.

3. Middle level of presentation. This is where children work in exercise books, eg. Skills work in a literacy lesson. Work on prefixes, suffixes, comprehension work, how to write extended sentences. There should be clear evidence of the school's handwriting style, with finger spaces and correct joins where they have been taught. With this type of task, the high quality of the top level of presentation should not be expected or demanded, but the lowest level of presentation would be unacceptable.

**Adult handwriting:**

1. Top level of handwriting: During handwriting lessons, or when producing handwritten labels to go with displays of children's work.

2. Middle level of handwriting: Handwritten comments in children's exercise books. These should be neatly written, using the school's handwriting style. If they are written untidily, they can be inaccessible to the children, making the written comment worthless. Badly written comments give children mixed and contradictory messages. Due to the time required to write perhaps thirty handwritten comments, it is unrealistic for these to be written to the top level standards. The same principles as the middle level of presentation for children's writing should apply here.

 3. Bottom level of handwriting. This is where the quality of adult handwriting does not matter at all. eg. A guided writing activity. If a class are offering adjectives and adverbs in rapid succession to enhance a sentence, it would be counterproductive for the adult to write slowly and meticulously in their most beautiful handwriting. Guided writing should be short, sharp and pacey. In this bottom level of handwriting, with crossings out, insertion of extra words and arrows to move sections of language within the sentence, so the thought process is also being modelled. The only criteria should be that the children are able to read what the adult has written.

**Handwriting in the Early Years:**

Children within EYFS develop their fine motor control in a variety of ways within continuous provision. When children are ready to transfer their mark making skills in to writing, weekly handwriting sessions are accessed. Children are expected to access writing daily using a line guide to form letters correctly.

**Exceptions for handwriting expectations:**

For children with dyspraxia or other handwriting difficulties, the teacher may need to look for SEN support. These children may already be receiving handwriting tuition as part of their support.

Children who move schools may well have already learned another handwriting style. If they enter school during the FS/KS1 stage, teachers may wish them to recap from the previous book, and this may be completed – with the cooperation of parents – as a homework activity. Children who move schools during the KS2 stage may well have formed a personal handwriting style, which, although different, is clear, fluent and legible. It may be inappropriate to alter their handwriting style at this stage.

**Celebration of handwriting across school:**

All classrooms must have a display celebrating children’s writing and good presentation of work across all subjects. Displaying children’s work should be a high priority on corridor displays in order for children to recognise the value of sharing their best work.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

It is the role of the writing subject leader to monitor the teaching and learning of handwriting throughout the school. This is done through regular work sampling, analysis of assessment pieces and lesson observations. Feedback from this monitoring is used to inform staff of necessary developments in order to raise standards. Monitoring is supported by the Head-teacher and SLT.

**Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be monitored by the Literacy Leader and SLT on a three year basis.

Policy agreed: November 2019

