



Upper Beeding Primary School

Handwriting Policy

January 2024



Children need to develop a legible, fluent joined handwriting style to enable them to write fluently and confidently for the range of purposes and audience they will meet both in school and adult life. Handwriting is a complex perceptual-motor skill that is dependent upon the development and integration of a number of cognitive, perceptual, and motor skills. The skill of handwriting needs to be taught; it can be effectively taught through modelling, explanation and practice. Teachers must demonstrate letter formation and joins regularly and children must practise by carefully copying and repeating. It is important to observe children writing to ensure that they are forming letters correctly.

Aims

In teaching handwriting, our aims are to ensure children:

- Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters in cursive handwriting;
- Develop flow and speed so that they are able to express themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes;
- Take care and develop pride in the presentation of their work and;
- Foster success in spelling.

Teaching and Learning

In order to achieve these aims, the following principles will be followed:

- Children in Reception will engage in targeted programs such as 'Funky Fingers' and 'Dough Activities' to strengthen their hand skills;
- Handwriting should be taught explicitly in short (20 minute) sessions;
- It needs to be modelled by the teacher and then supervised;
- It should be linked to phonic and spelling patterns (this will help with handwriting and with the 'muscle memory' of spellings);
- High expectations of writing are needed i.e. correct formation of letters, consistent fluidity and correct joins;
- Teachers need to model good handwriting at all times;
- From Year 3 children will be offered the opportunity to experiment with using a pen with the expectation that most children will be writing in pen by the end of year 4;
- The environment should reflect the handwriting style adopted by the school with a balance of handwritten and computer-generated labels. Children's handwriting should be displayed. Visual prompts can be displayed to remind children of the correct handwriting joins. Children will also see and experience a variety of writing styles.

Handwriting (National Curriculum 2014)

Foundation Stage

Good handwriting relies on secure motor control and hand-eye coordination. Children in the Foundation Stage should learn handwriting through movement with the actual writing of letters as the ultimate aim. Children will:

- Engage in activities requiring hand-eye coordination;
- Use one handed tools and equipment;
- Draw lines and circles using gross motor movement;
- Manipulate objects with increasing control;
- Begin to use anticlockwise movement and retrace vertical lines;

- Begin to form recognisable letters;
- Use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.

Year 1 children

Pupils 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 practice these.

Year 2 children

Pupils 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.

Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4)

Pupils should be 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 un-joined;
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting (for example, by ensuring that the down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch).

Key Stage 1 and Lower Key Stage 2 children should practice their handwriting skills in the appropriate handwriting books.

Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6)

Pupils should be 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 (pencil is used in maths books and different colour pens for editing and peer marking).

Pre-cursive and cursive handwriting style

At Upper Beeding Primary School we introduce pre-cursive handwriting **when a child is developmentally ready** (Reception and Year 1). The joining of letters is introduced when a child can form all letters correctly and with confidence. This should occur for most children in Year 2.

Advantages

- The motor memory of the child's hand and fingers help them to spell as each word becomes one movement and not many;
- Children are able to write at a faster pace;
- It lessens the chance of reversing letters;
- Spaces between words become more obvious;

- Upper and lower case letters are clearer.

Challenges

- Pencil Grip: Children should be encouraged to use the correct pencil grip (holding the pencil between the thumb and middle finger, resting forefinger on pencil) and sit with good posture (Ideally a child should have his/her feet flat on the ground and his/her forearm resting comfortably on the table, with table and chair of an appropriate size);
- Incorrect formation of letters – this can be easily addressed by looking at the letters in groups, relating them to patterns and emphasising correct starting positions.
- Left-handed children – special consideration for the left-handed child should be shown by:
 1. The child should sit to the left of right-handed children;
 2. They should tilt the paper at a slant to the right;
 3. A left-handed child may also benefit from holding the pencil higher up.
- It is important to use appropriate writing materials at each stage of writing development:
 1. A sharp pencil is essential for all early handwriting activities
 2. Fluent and neat writers can move onto pen from Year 3. By the end of their time at Upper Beeding Primary School all children should have had experience and been encouraged to use all writing tools in current use i.e. pencil, ball points, fountain, brushes, computer fonts.

Resources

Upper Beeding handwriting pack (every teacher and teaching assistant have access to this)

- Children in Reception will have opportunities to extend and refine their fine and gross motor control through quality on going provision in the Early Years environment.
- Children in Key Stage 1 (Reception when developmentally ready) and Lower Key Stage 2 will use a handwriting book to ensure that they know the correct position for a letter to start on the line, with lead-ins
- Children will have sharp pencils/handwriting pens
- Children will be given a handwriting pen to use but they are also able to bring in their own pen from home if agreed by teacher that this is suitable, ballpoint, fountain but NO biros.
- 'Penpals' program on Interactive Whiteboard

Please note NC 2014 has useful non-statutory guidance on handwriting, which is useful and can be accessed to support the teaching of handwriting.

Jan 2024: Updated to include changes to the targeted handwriting programs used in Reception.

Date of Policy: January 2024

To Be Reviewed: January 2027