

Handwriting and Presentation Policy

Purley CE Primary School

Reviewed: Spring 2024

Next Review: Spring 2026

Learn to Love, love to learn



Purley Church of England (VC) Primary School

Handwriting and Presentation Policy

January 2024

The importance of handwriting should not be under-estimated. Good handwriting is an essential skill and must be actively taught by demonstration, explanation and practice across the whole school. A good standard of neat handwriting is a life skill, which enhances the presentation of work across different areas of the curriculum.

The success of this handwriting policy depends on the correct application of the policy throughout the whole school. Our responsibility as teachers is to ensure that high standards are achieved and maintained by following the whole school handwriting policy.

Aims

- To ensure consistent teaching through a whole school policy.
- To improve handwriting and achieve a higher standard in presentation skills in all subjects throughout the school.
- To encourage pupils to take pride in their work and to install a positive attitude towards handwriting.
- To make pupils aware that different degrees of neatness may be appropriate for different tasks.
- To enable pupils to be confident and independent in their approach to handwriting.

Provision

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.

Children should be allowed to practise a particular set of letters, simply concentrating on developing accuracy, fluency and speed without the distraction of composing text. As for all motor skills, long practice sessions spaced apart are much less productive than short and frequent sessions. These short sessions can be blocked over a week each half term.

There should be times at both key stages when this aspect of writing is a focus for attention and more time is devoted to the objectives relating to handwriting and presentation. Handwriting needs to become an automatic process which frees children to focus on the content of their writing.

Linking handwriting with spelling and phonics is one of the most powerful ways of developing the visual memory. Handwriting and spelling can be taught at the same time, one reinforcing the other.

Inclusion

Handwriting in all subject areas, exercises and work will be regularly monitored. The vast majority of pupils will be able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils may need more support. Children who find handwriting difficult will be targeted for handwriting intervention and activities to

develop gross motor skills and fine motor skills, along with plenty of pre-writing activities to loosen up the wrist and upper arm (Dough Disco). Slanted writing boards, rubber pencil grips and gross and fine motor skills programmes (Write from the Start) may be used to help children who find handwriting difficult.

In some situations, there may be a requirement for the children to use a word processor to complete tasks.

Every child is encouraged to adopt the school's style of handwriting. Where a child is admitted from another school and whose writing is clear, fluent and joined in another style, we respect that and make no attempts to modify the style.

Provision for left-handed pupils

All teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision:

- Paper should be positioned to the left for right-handed pupils and to the right for left-handed pupils and slanted to suit the individual in either case.
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision.
- 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 well be necessary before pupils write left to-right automatically.

Use of pencil grips



Where children struggle to hold the pencil with a tripod grip, a 2-finger pencil grip is introduced. The children need to be taught and shown how to use the grip comfortably and correctly. It is helpful to discuss this with parents and send one home for further practise when writing at home.

The 2 -finger pencil grips are kept in the stationery cupboard.

Organisation

Six stages have been identified and these form the basic organisational structure of our teaching.

1. Readiness for writing: gross and fine motor skills leading to letter formation (Foundation)
2. Learning and embedding letter formation (KS1)
3. Introducing a cursive script (KS1)
4. Securing joins (Upper KS1 and Lower KS2)
5. Practising presentation skills, speed and fluency using joined-up handwriting (Lower KS2)
6. Embedding presentation skills, legibility and fluency using joined-up handwriting (Upper Key Stage 2)

The Role of the Teacher:

- To follow the school policy to help each child develop legible and fluent handwriting.
- To use all opportunities for writing as handwriting practice, regardless of subject.
- To observe pupils, monitor progress and determine targets for development.

- To use and model the correct letter formation and joined up handwriting.
- To correct poor letter formation and joined up handwriting.
- To ensure correct posture with children sitting comfortably and upright, with both arms on the table and feet flat on the floor.
- To teach the correct grip and writing pressure.
- To help improve muscle strength for handwriting through exercise.
- To make provision for left-handed children to develop free flowing writing.
- To ensure each child has a suitable implement before they begin and that pencils are adequately sharpened and pens are suitable for fluent writing.

To achieve this, children will be taught using this handwriting policy:

- To develop fine motor control.
- The importance of correct posture, sitting position and paper position whether right or left handed.
- To use a pen/pencil and to hold it effectively.
- To write from left to right and top to bottom on a page.
- To start and finish letters correctly.
- To form letters of consistent size and shape.
- The language of writing and how to use the correct terminology, (e.g. ascenders).
- To put regular spaces between words.
- How to form upper and lower case letters.
- How to write legibly in both joined and printed style.
- To use different styles of writing for different purposes.
- The importance of neat and clear presentation to communicate meaning effectively.
- To develop greater control and fluency as they become increasingly confident.

Foundation Stage

To enable children to acquire a legible, fluent and fast handwriting style, they need to develop good gross and fine motor control skills and recognition of letter shapes and patterns from an early stage.

Children will take part in a multi-sensory approach through activities to develop their fine and gross motor-skills and to recognise patterns. This will help prepare children for handwriting, consolidate their motor control and recognise letter shapes. Exploring letter shapes and letter formation using their index finger in sand; sky writing with both hands; making patterns on each other's backs and using large equipment to make marks e.g. big chalks, jumbo pencils and crayons, large paint brushes and finger paints will help pupils feel the movement in the hand. They will be given a range of materials to practise handwriting opportunities and to develop their handwriting to their full potential at that age. Handwriting practise will also run alongside their phonic learning.

To encourage the correct letter formation, the children will be taught letter formation in letter families as per the requirements of the current English National Curriculum. Upper and lower case letters will be taught together in these families.

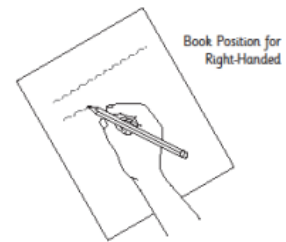
Children will focus on the correct letter movement rather than neatness at this early stage.

Teachers will be vigilant to ensure that bad habits do not become ingrained and that the specific needs of left-handed pupils and those with Special Educational Needs are met. Children will receive instant feedback when errors in pencil grip, sitting position, or letter formation are seen.

Repetition entrenches the correct letter formation and letter direction, delivering a lifelong, good handwriting habit.

Children should begin to learn:

- How to hold a pencil correctly between the thumb and forefinger, with the pencil resting on the third finger – the tripod grip.
- How to use a pencil to form recognisable printed letters.
- Correct posture and sitting position.
- Correct positioning of the paper and the organisation of the writing space.



The letter formation families are:

c a d g q s

i l t u

m n h b p

o r **v w**

x z

e f j k y

KS1

Children are taught:

- The basic letter joins, adding serifs (lead in and exit lines)
- Where letters start and finish.
- How to sit letters on a line.

- The letters in the letter families.
- How to form clear ascenders and descenders.
- To use spacing and finger spaces between words.
- Consistent writing size.
- Capital letters and their appropriate use.

<h2 style="color: #0070C0;">Letter families</h2> <p style="color: #0070C0;">For teaching correct letter formations</p>	
Letter family 1 <i>2 o'clock letters</i>	c a d g q s
Letter family 2 <i>Straight letters</i>	i l t u
Letter family 3 <i>Tunnel letters</i>	n m h b p
Letter family 4 <i>top joiners</i>	o r v w
Letter family 5 <i>square letters</i>	x z
Letter family 6 <i>odd letters</i>	e f j k y

Handwriting lessons will be frequent, ensuring the correct letter formation is used. Children will continue to develop fine and gross motor skills with a range of multi-sensory activities. Teachers and support staff will continue to guide and correct children on using a comfortable and efficient pencil grip and writing pressure. Linking handwriting and spelling/phonics are also important at this stage. The regular practise of letter patterns and the copying of high frequency words will help develop good visual and writing habits. By copying whole words and linking their handwriting to patterns learnt, the children will develop a good motor memory, which will aid independent writing and spelling. Teachers will be vigilant to ensure that bad habits do not become ingrained and that the specific needs of left-handed pupils and those with Special Educational Needs are met. Children will receive instant feedback when errors in pencil grip; writing pressure; sitting position or letter formation are seen.

Implementation - KS1 and KS2

Demonstration by the teacher, either to a group or an individual is as important as observation. The quickest improvement in handwriting skills can be achieved by allowing the children to copy from a piece of writing on paper, in front of them. When copying from the board, precision is lost as the child keeps looking up at the board and down at their book. It is also harder to translate sizing accurately from the board. Giving time for pupils to copy a small section of their own work in their best handwriting, allows them to see their improvements and identify next steps. This needs to be done across the key stages.

Key Stage 2

Teaching and learning will focus on:

- Embedding letter formation, consistency in size, proportion and spacing of each letter.
- Sitting correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.
- Ensuring that Capital letters do not join to lower case letters.
- Developing a legible, joined handwriting style.
- Using joined up handwriting the majority of the time.
- Maintaining legibility while writing fluently and with increasing speed.
- Neat and legible handwriting for presentation purposes.

Teachers will continue to be vigilant to ensure that bad habits do not become ingrained and that the specific needs of left-handed pupils and those with Special Educational Needs are met. Children will receive instant feedback when errors in pencil grip; writing pressure; sitting position or letter formation are seen.

Years 3 and 4

Children consolidate their use of the basic handwriting joins, ensuring consistency in size, proportion and spacing of letters. Handwriting speed, fluency and legibility are built up through practice. By Year 4, cursive handwriting should be always used unless other specific forms are required for example, printing on a map, a fast script for notes.

Years 5 and 6

We aim for them to develop a clear, fluent style and by the end of Year 6, pupils should be able to adapt their handwriting for different purposes, such as:

- A neat, legible hand for finished, presented work.
- A faster script for note making.
- An ability to print for labelling diagrams, writing an email address or for algebra.
- Capital letters for filling in a form.

Pupils may start to develop an individual style based on the principles of good handwriting taught in previous years. Experimentation with different styles and writing implements should be encouraged with the aim of increasing speed whilst maintaining legibility.

Use of implements

Handwriting pens are introduced in Year 5 and used for all written work (not maths). This ensures that over the course of Y5 and Y6 pupils have adequate time to practise using a pen and develop confidence and proficiency before moving to secondary school.

Adult Handwriting

The teachers and support staff's handwriting is the model for our pupils. All should produce quality writing at all times, including when marking or commenting on pupils' work and on displays.

Presentation

Presentation of work is an important aspect of children's learning. The quality of presentation reflects the children's skills and the pride they take in their work. How work is presented will depend on the learning purpose and the audience.

Presentation Guidelines

We encourage children to take a pride in their work. We set them clear guidelines for each piece of work, so they know what is expected of them. We ensure they have the appropriate materials necessary for producing the best quality of work. (Good pencils, rulers and appropriate paper for different tasks). We provide them with a variety of audiences so that they are encouraged to present good work at all times (e.g. other classes, parents, community, notice boards, display) We encourage children to look after their work and keep their work clean.

The layout of work in Years 1 and 2 should be set up as described below when it is within the capability of the child

- For English and Topic work the long date should be used and for Maths, the short date should be placed on the left-hand side of the page.
- Errors are to be rubbed out or crossed out with a single line
- Paragraphs are indicated by missing a line.

The layout of work in KS2 should be set out as described below:

- For English and Topic work long date and for Maths short date should be used and placed on the left-hand side of the page, right of the margin.
- **Title** – miss a line directly beneath the date line and add a central title
- Title is to be underlined.
- Errors are to be rubbed out or crossed out with a single line.
- Paragraphs are indicated by a new line. Lower KS2 to leave a line to indicate the start to a new paragraph. When fluent this will progress onto starting a new line without the need of missing a line but indenting.

Computing

Pupils are encouraged to use and evaluate a range of fonts and writing frames to select whatever is appropriate to suit particular purposes.

Assessment and monitoring

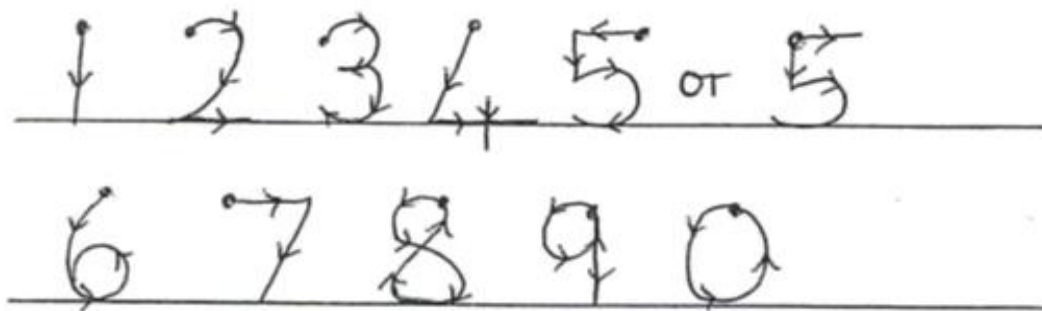
- In the early stages of handwriting, teachers observe closely to ensure letters are correctly formed.
- Later, assessments are made against criteria which may include the following: -
Is the writing legible and generally presentable?
Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
Are the joins correctly made?

Are the spaces between letters, words and lines appropriate?
 Is the size of writing appropriate?
 Is the writing properly aligned?

Presentation of work Guidelines

Year Group	Written Work	Maths Work
Foundation	Plain paper Plain/wide lined paper	Plain paper 2cm squared paper
KS1	Wide lined paper Dated by children (long date) Title – where needed Mistakes in pencil rubbed out or crossed out with a single line	1cm squared paper Dated by children (short date) One digit per square
KS2	All work to have a title and long date. Lined paper. If using plain paper, line guides to be used if appropriate. Mistakes in pencil rubbed out and crossed out with a single line if in pen.	All work to have title and short date Squared paper (one digit per square) Work evenly spaced spaced Pencil only to be used in number work

Numbers



This policy will be reviewed on a biennial basis.

Date of Next Review: Spring 2026