

Handwriting Policy

Burnside Primary School



Written: September 2020

Reviewed: July 2021(GP)

Next review: July 2022 (GP)

Aims

- To know the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively.
- To write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed by:
 - Having a correct pencil grip
 - Knowing that all letters start from the top, except d and e which start in the middle
 - Forming all letters correctly
 - Knowing the size and orientation of letters

Teaching and Learning

Children should:

- Experience coherence and continuity in teaching and learning from Nursery through to Year 6
- Develop a recognition and appreciation of pattern and line and be given support in forming a triangular grip
- Understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly
- Be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work and therefore study handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement
- Be supported in developing correct spelling quickly through a multi-sensory approach to handwriting in the Early Years and by joining graphemes in KS1
- Be shown how to be able to write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes

Teaching time

There should be a minimum of 3x15 mins handwriting sessions each week in Reception and KS1. When children have been taught joins, time for practise should be built into KS2. Pupils who find handwriting difficult should be

targeted for regular intervention and children should be encouraged to apply what they have been taught in all lessons, when writing.

Model Used

Burnside Primary School uses the Nelson Handwriting Scheme.

NB – Children are to be taught individual letters first so that they can see them as individual units before learning to join. Teachers MUST demonstrate letter formation on paper and whiteboards.

Paper

As motor skills increase then the size of writing should decrease. Children should start writing in A4 plain books then, as their handwriting improves, handwriting lined exercise books should be introduced.

EYFS

Children take part in activities to develop their fine and gross motor skills and recognition of patterns as part of continuous provision (eg. Form letters in sand, with paint or in air). Children should be taught correct pencil grip, then how to use a pencil to form recognisable letters, with correct formation. Staff must intervene if children are attempting to form letters incorrectly.

It is important that children are introduced to writing on paper early and do not just practise forming letters on white boards. This is because it is necessary that they develop a feel for the correct pressure needed when writing. When children are ready, they are to be given opportunities to practise handwriting on lines. These lines should be well spaced (about 2cm apart).

Handwriting should be taught discretely and discussed within, and linked to, phonics sessions. Modelling letter formation is vital at this stage. It is important that handwriting is not offered as an independent activity as staff need to ensure the correct formation of each letter. Intervention as mistakes occur is essential to avoid the risk of the reinforcement of errors. Children finding handwriting difficult will be targeted for regular intervention.

Year 1

Children will continue to develop fine and gross motor skills with a range of multi-sensory activities. Handwriting should be taught discretely and discussed within, and linked to, phonics sessions. Children should use wider lined exercise books. Correct pencil grip and posture should be modelled as everyday practice.

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Children in Year 1 will be introduced to joining letters, using the four handwriting joins from **Nelson's** handwriting scheme. Pupils finding handwriting difficult will be targeted for regular intervention.

Year 2

In Year 2, the majority of children will write in A4 lined books (8mm).

By the end of KS1 children will be able to write legibly, using upper and lower-case letters appropriately and correct spacing between words. Most pupils will have learnt how to join letters, using the four handwriting joins from the Nelson Handwriting scheme.

Children finding handwriting difficult will be targeted for regular intervention.

KS 2

During this stage, the children continue to have direct teaching and, where necessary, opportunities to practise handwriting. We aim for them to develop a clear, fluent style and, by the end of Y6, be able to adapt their handwriting for different purposes such as: a neat, legible hand for finished, presented work, a faster script for notes and the ability to print for labelling diagrams etc.

Teaching Sequence

To develop independence the following teaching technique will be seen across KS1.

- Hand and finger strength
- Physical preparation
- Tracing
- Patterns
- Over teacher's writing (highlighter)
- Under teacher's writing (directly under words – write in large letters, leave large spaces between words)
- Independence

Techniques for teaching letter formation

- Model good handwriting all of the time
- Demonstrate
- Talk through the process
- Encourage children to verbalise the process
- Children form letters in the air
- Finger trace over tactile letters
- Write over highlighter pen (or dotted letters)
- Draw around templates
- Write in sand with finger or stick
- Write with chalk on chalkboard
- Wax resist letters
- Form letters with pegs on pegboard
- Form letters with beads in plasticine
- Finger trace the outline of letters on the back of the person in front of you

Getting ready to write

Seating and posture

- Chair and table should be at a comfortable height
- The table should support the forearm so that it rests slightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor
- Encourage pupils to sit up straight and not slouch
- The height of the chair should be such that the thighs are horizontal and feet flat on the floor
- Tables should be free of clutter
- Rooms should be well lit
- Left handed pupils should sit on the left of their partners

Pencil grip

- Children should write with a reasonably sharp pencil. Handwriting pens introduced in Y4. Special left-handed pens available also.
- A tripod grip is the most efficient way of holding a pencil

For right handers

- Hold lightly between thumb and forefinger about 3cm away from the point
- The paper should be placed to the right, tilted slightly to the left
- Use the left hand to steady the paper

For left handers

- Hold lightly between thumb and forefinger, resting on the first knuckle of the middle finger
- Hold about 3cm from the tip
- The hand should be kept below the writing line
- The paper should be tilted slightly to the right at about 20-30 degrees
- Use the right hand to steady the paper

NB It is very important that a right handed child is **NOT** seated on the left hand side of a left handed child as their elbows will collide

Assessment

Teachers and senior leaders will monitor children's writing and presentation in books regularly. The following will be considered:

- Is the writing generally legible?
- Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
- Are the joins made correctly?
- Are the spaces between the letters, words and lines appropriate?
- Is the size of the writing appropriate?
- Is the writing properly aligned?
- Are the children being taught the appropriate stages as outlined in this policy (with Nelson in mind)?
- Are the writing standards achieved by the majority of pupils in line or exceeding the Level Descriptors in the National Curriculum?

Individual Assessment

Children must be observed as they write during handwriting lessons- the teacher must circulate, monitor and intervene. The following should be considered:

- Is the posture correct?
- Does the child hold the pencil correctly?
- Does the child use the correct movement when forming and/or joining letters?
- Are any letters/words reversed or inverted?
- Does the child write fluently?
- Is the writing easily legible?
- Is the pupil's handwriting development in line with our policy?
- Is the pupil's handwriting development in line or exceeding the National Curriculum statutory guidelines?

Inclusion

The vast majority of children are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and provision will be made for this through intervention, using small group situations. Teachers of children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills, should develop an individual programme designed to meet the specific requirements of the child.

Links to spelling

Linking handwriting to spelling is one of the most powerful ways of developing the visual memory. Handwriting should be taught first then practised using letters, blends, strings or digraphs so that patterns are internalised.

Resources

Nelson Handwriting scheme/associated teacher and pupil books/online resources

<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-school/nelson-handwriting--3>

Variety of pencil grips

Different size pencils/handwriting pens

G.L.Place 2018