



Happiness

Independence

Solid Foundation

Policy for Handwriting

Harefield Infant and Nursery School

June 2014

Aims

It is our aim at Harefield Infant School for children to learn to take pride in their work. In order to do this we teach the children the following -

1. To know the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively
2. To write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed by;
 - Sitting correctly
 - Having a correct pencil grip
 - Forming all letters correctly
 - Knowing the size and orientation of letters

Teaching time

There should be a **minimum** of 3 x 15 minute handwriting lessons each week as well as time to practice

Children who find handwriting difficult should be targeted for daily intervention.

Model used

Harefield Infant School uses the Nelson Thornes Handwriting Scheme with the following letter formation

Lower case letters

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Capitals

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Numbers

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

The Four Joins

1. to letters without ascenders
2. to letters with ascenders
3. horizontal joins
4. horizontal joins to letters with ascenders

The break letters (letters that aren't joined **from**) are:

b g j p q x y z s

See appendix 3 for examples of the break letters

NB children must be taught individual letters first so that they see them as individual units BEFORE learning to join.

Nursery

Children should start with mark making. As motor skills increase then the size of writing should decrease. Where children are not mark making the staff should ensure they have a range of fine motor activities.

Reception

All children should be mark making and paper provided that is appropriate to the task. Attention should be given to the development of gross and fine motor skills.

Lined paper is to be introduced in the last term for those children who are ready.

Where children are not making progress a Raising the Concern should be passed to the Inclusion team leader and Hand Writing without Tears Intervention considered.

Year 1

Children should start the year using handwriting books. Handwriting is to be taught 3 times per week with joins for those children who are ready. All children should be taught to join in the Spring Term. All children should be taught which letters belong to which handwriting families. (For example letters that are formed in similar ways) For those children who are not making good progress, Hand writing without Tears should be considered.

Year 2

It is expected that most of the children will be joining their writing. All children are to start the year in narrow lined books. For some children they will need to continue on wide lined books until ready. (It is expected that these children will on the Handwriting without Tears Intervention)

Children are to be taught handwriting in handwriting books 3 times per week.

Teaching Sequence

- Hand and finger strength
- Physical preparation
- Tracing
- Patterns
- Letter orientation
- Independence

For the order of teaching letters and joins see Appendix 2

Techniques for teaching letter formation

- Model good handwriting all the time
- Demonstrate
- Talk through the process
- Encourage children to verbalise the process
- Children form letters in the air
- Finger trace over tactile letters
- Draw round 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 lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor
- Encourage children 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

See appendix 1 for warm up exercises.

Pencil grip

- Children should write with a pencil and when fluent in a joined up style are given a pen licence.
- A tripod grip is the most efficient way of holding a pencil

For right handers

- Hold lightly between the 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°
- 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!

Please refer to Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book p10 for further information

Assessment

During work scrutinies handwriting will be looked at.

- 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 writing standards achieved by the majority of pupils in line with the Level Descriptors in the National Curriculum?

Individual assessment

Children should be observed as they write during handwriting lessons – the teacher must circulate, monitor and intervene. Teachers also need to monitor and mark whole pieces of writing. 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 reversed or inverted?

- Does the child write fluently and rhythmically?
- Is the writing easily legible?
- Is the pupil's handwriting development in line with the Level Descriptors in the National Curriculum?

Links to spelling from Year 1 onwards

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

Remember to use **Look – Say – Cover – Write – Check**

The child:

Looks at the word carefully

Says the word

Covers the word so that it can't be seen

Writes the whole word from memory

Checks the word is written correctly

If not, repeat.

Resources

Nelson Thornes Handwriting Teacher's Book

Nelson Thornes Handwriting CD Roms

Monitoring and evaluation

This policy will be evaluated annually.

APPENDIX 2

Order of teaching

Single letters (YR)

• **c a d g q o**

• **e s f**

• **i l t**

• **u y j k**

• **r n m**

• **h b p**

- **V W X Z**

Supporting activities

- tracing patterns
- tracing
- copying over (letters, numbers and words)
- copying under (letters, numbers and words)

Joins Y1 (going into Y2)

Introduction of the four handwriting joins

- First join; un um ig id ed eg an or ing ung
- Second join; ch sh th tl ll ill sli slu ck ack st sti ink unk
- Third join; od pg re ve oon oom
- Fourth join; wl vl of ff fl flo
- Practise the break letters b p g q y j z
- Practise capital letters

Supporting activities

- Match and copy captions
- Trace and copy patterns
- Copy words
- Copy sentences
- Write out menu
- Copy poem
- Alphabetical ordering

See Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book p30 for learning outcomes and further information

Joins Y2 (going into Y3)

Revision

- Practise the break letters b p g q y j z
- Practise capital letters

See *Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book* p30 for learning outcomes and further information

Further practise of the four handwriting joins

- in ine
- ut ute
- ve vi
- ok oh
- sh as es (practising two ways of joining the letter s)
- ri ru ry (practising joining from the letter r)
- oa ad as (practising joining to and from the letter a)
- ee ea ed (practising joining from the letter)
- ow ov ox (practising joining from the letter o)
- ky hy ly (practising joining to the letter y)
- ha ta fa (practising joining to the letter a)
- od oo og(practising joining from the letter o)
- er ir ur (practising joining to the letter r)
- ai al ay
- o you oi
- re oe fe (practising the horizontal join to the letter e)
- fu wu vu (practising the horizontal join to the letter u)
- ot ol ok (practising joining to ascenders)
- ai al ow ol (practising all the joins)

Supporting activities

- copy words
- copy sentences
- copy poems

- match questions to answers
- copy jokes
- make and copy compound words

See Nelson Handwriting Teacher's Book p54 for learning outcomes and further information