

Thomas Eaton Community Primary School



Handwriting Policy

Ratified and Adopted by the Full Governing Body

on 28th January 2016

Introduction

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all teaching staff. The Governing Body, in particular the Standards Committee, receive regular reports on the progress of English provision (including Handwriting) from the Headteacher and English Leader.

This policy needs to be read alongside other school policies including:

- Curriculum and Planning policy
- English policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage policy
- Homework policy
- Gifted and Talented policy
- Special Educational Needs policy
- Marking and Feedback Policy
- Assessment Policy

Aims

Our overall aim is for pupils to develop legible, fluent and efficient handwriting which can be adapted to the purpose of the task. At Thomas Eaton Primary School, joined up handwriting is taught with a sequential and progressive approach. Children are introduced to this style from early years as it is considered to be the most natural development of children's earliest attempts at writing.

Handwriting is a taught skill and it is important that teachers are seen to put a high value on teaching and sustaining good handwriting. We believe that children's self-esteem and pride in their work can be raised by good quality presentation.

In handwriting, as in other skills, children will develop at different rates; for that reason, it is important that there is a consistent style of teaching throughout the school, and that teachers and teaching assistants consider themselves to be teachers of handwriting, with a clear understanding of the progression of skills and of how to remedy errors.

Each aim is considered equally important:

- To teach pupils to write with a following hand which is legible and swift
- To enable pupils to develop their own style of handwriting as they progress through Key Stage 2
- To support the development of correct spelling and to aid the elimination of letter reversals through the learning of word patterns and the correct joining of letters
- To ensure that pupils of differing abilities are provided with appropriate and achievable goals
- To assist pupils in taking pride with the presentation of their work
- To teach correct letter formation
- To display excellent examples of handwriting in every classroom and around the school

Teaching and Organisation

The school uses the Nelson Handwriting scheme which is available for reference in each classroom. A reference sheet showing an alphabet of capital, lowercase and joined letters (appendix 1) and an example of joined script (appendix 2) is available to children in every classroom, and to parents on the school website. Children who join the school with established fluent joined handwriting will have the option to continue with their current style of handwriting.

The following is a brief outline of our agreed policy:

Gross and fine motor skills: activities to develop gross and fine motor skills are essential to the development of good handwriting. Some pupils may require additional support with the development of their gross and fine motor skills for handwriting into Key Stage 2.

Posture: children are taught the importance of sitting upright and correctly on their chair, with their feet on the floor and the back of the chair supporting their backs.

Pencil grip: children should use a tripod grip and be given constant reminders until this is established. Different writing resources or implements are available in school for children who find them useful (see resource list appendix 3)

Position of paper: Right handed pupils may find it useful to tilt paper slightly to the left, left handed pupils should be encouraged to tilt their paper slightly to the right to improve their view of what they are writing and to reduce smudging when they write in ink. Paper should be steadied with the free hand. Some pupils may require the support of a sloped surface.

Paper: in pupils' books lined paper is used. Where work is redrafted and presented for display, children may use plain paper and guidelines. For the teaching and practising of handwriting pupils will use the line spacing suitable for their year group or the development of their writing.

Correct formation: The correct formation of letters is given the highest priority as it is impossible to move on to joining correctly unless letters are correctly formed. Pupils are taught to form letters correctly, paying attention to the starting point for each letter, and the relative heights of the body of each letter to any ascender and descender. Letters are taught in groups based on the starting position for each letter.

Joining letters: The National Curriculum Programme of Study for writing outlines the expected progression in the taught skills for handwriting for each year group (Appendix 4). This is in line with the progression of the Nelson Handwriting scheme.

Correcting mistakes: The use of rubbers is to be discouraged except in the case of work in pencil for display. Otherwise, mistakes in pencil or ink should be crossed out using a single horizontal line and the whole word rewritten.

Teacher modelling: Examples of handwriting by teaching staff such as date, modelled writing on the IWB and flip charts etc will support pupils by providing a correct example to follow.

Writing implements and pens licences: When pupils have achieved legible and fluent joined handwriting in pencil, they will be awarded their pen licence. This will be presented and celebrated in the whole school assembly as well as in the weekly newsletter. Additionally, class teachers will also

ensure that improvements in handwriting, whatever the ability of the child, are recognised. The pen to be used is a Uni-ball Signo Gelstick in black.

Timing of handwriting teaching and practising:

EYFS- Children have opportunities throughout the day to do handwriting. Sometimes children do handwriting as an early morning activity in their handwriting books. They practise large air formation during phonics, during free choice in sand, gloop, shaving foam etc, with chalks on the playground. 'Formal' handwriting is not taught until the end of the Reception year, instead the children are exposed to fine motor skills activities and a range of experiences to grip the pencil with a strong grip.

Yr1- Handwriting sessions take place four times a week in the afternoons. The children revisit learning from Reception Class; practising the basic structure of letters, looking at capitals and lowercase, before moving onto Year 1 material focussing on beginning to use joins.

Yr2- Year 2 handwriting sessions take place twice a week for 15 minutes. They also complete occasional early morning sheets. The focus is letter formation and correct joins.

Yr3- Daily handwriting practice (5 minutes) – tracing over patterns to develop pencil skills – during afternoon registration.

There are two taught sessions of about 20 minutes each, again in the afternoon. The children revisit the KS1 programme and then follow the Y3 programme. Writing is completed in handwriting books.

Pencil grips are available and the correct way to hold a pencil is on display.

Yr4/5- One specific 30 minute handwriting session is taught one afternoon a week to the entire class. This session concentrates on working through the scheme from the beginning to ensure that all the children become consistent. All handwriting is completed in handwriting books.

Alongside this, groups of children, attend two 15 minute sessions per week taught by a TA. Children attending these booster sessions are specifically selected due to their incorrect pencil grip, poor letter formation and reluctance to leave finger spaces between words.

The class TA also works with specific children, five mornings a week following the programme 'Write from the Start'. This scheme concentrates on improving the fine motor skills.

Yr5/6- In Year 5 and 6 the children practise handwriting as part of the varied independent/ Guided English activities. The aim is for them to write fluently, legibly and at speed. As skills are taught earlier in the school; at this stage the emphasis is for the children to develop their own joined style in all their writing.

Appendix 1

1. Letter formation and joining progression (Nelson)

The letter forms

The lower-case alphabet for Workbooks 1–4

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

*The lower-case alphabet for Developing Skills books,
Resources and Assessment books Red, Yellow, 1, 2, 3, 4
and Workbooks 5 and 6.*

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

A letter slope of 8° from the vertical to the right
is introduced in *Developing Skills Book 1*.

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

The lower-case print alphabet

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

The capital letters

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

These are the same throughout the scheme.

The numerals

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

The joining sets

Set 1

a c d e h i k l m
n s t u

Twelve letters with exit flicks plus s.

Set 2

a c d e g i j m n o
p q r s u v w x y

Nineteen letters which start at the top of the
x-height

Set 3

b f h k l t

Six letters which start at the top of the ascender

Set 4

f o r v w

Five letters which finish at the top of the
x-height

The break letters

b g j p q x y z

Eight letters after which no join is made. Joins
are not made to or from the letter z.

The joins

The first join	Set 1	→	Set 2	in	am	ch
The second join	1	→	3	ab	ch	
The third join	4	→	2	oa	wo	
The fourth join	4	→	3	wh	ob	
The break letters				bigger		

The joined style

The quick brown fox
jumps over the lazy
dog.

Appendix 2

Example of joined Nelson script

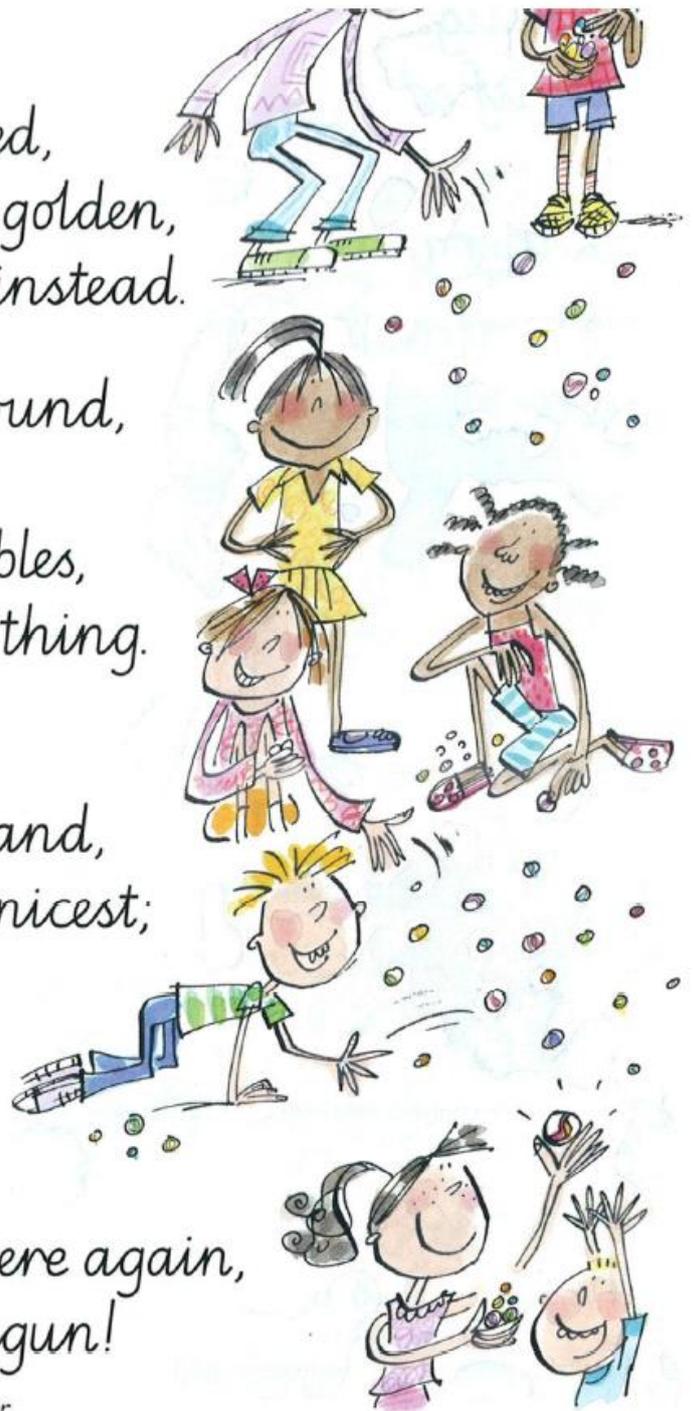
Marbles in my pocket,
Blue and green and red,
And some are yellow-golden,
And some are brown instead.

Marbles in the playground,
Big and little ring –
Oh, I like playing marbles,
But that's a different thing.

Marbles in my pocket,
Smooth within my hand,
That's the part that's nicest;
Do you understand?

Marbles in my pocket
To rattle when I run!
For winter days are here again,
And marble-time's begun!

From **'Marbles in my Pocket'** by Lydia Pender



Appendix 3

Appendix 4

Nelson Handwriting

Year	Level	NC
1	Red	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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' (ie letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these
2	Yellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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
3	Book 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters,

4	Book 2	<p>when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, [for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant, and that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch]
5	Book 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ 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
6	Book 4	