



Mrs. Bland's Infant and Nursery School : Policy Document

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Mrs Bland's Infant and Nursery School – Handwriting and Presentation Policy

At Mrs Bland's School we believe that neat, well-formed handwriting and presentation of written work helps to raise standards as the pupils take pride in and have a sense of ownership of their work. As a school we are adopting the continuous cursive handwriting method.

There are four main purposes to this policy:

- To establish an entitlement for all pupils;
- To establish expectations for teachers of this subject;
- To promote continuity and coherence across the school;
- To state the school's approaches to this subject in order to promote public and parents' and carers' understanding of the curriculum.

Why is a handwriting policy important for an infant school?

Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Given effective teaching, handwriting can be mastered by most pupils by the time they are seven or eight years old enabling them, with practice, to go on to develop a faster and more mature hand ready for secondary school and adult life. The surest way to ensure consistent teaching and the development of legible, fluent joined handwriting throughout the school is to have a written policy agreed and put into practice by all staff. Handwriting is a movement skill, children need to practise handwriting movements correctly and often. The first handwriting lessons are vital and the most important issue is to ensure that the children we teach learn to form the letters of the alphabet with the correct sequence of strokes from the beginning. The correct formation of all letters needs to become quite automatic and may require a lot of practice.

Suzanne Tiburtius of the National Handwriting Association

Aims:

- To raise standards in writing across the school.
- To have a consistent approach across both EYFS and Key Stage One when teaching handwriting and presentation of work throughout the school.
- To adopt a common approach towards handwriting by all adults when writing in children's books, on the whiteboard or on displays / resources.
- For pupils to:
Achieve a neat, legible style with correctly formed letters.
Develop flow and speed, so that eventually they are able to produce the letters automatically and in their independent writing.

Implementation

Entitlement and Curriculum Provision

To ensure a consistent approach, the school follows the Nelson Handwriting Scheme. Handwriting is taught daily through short, focused sessions. Teaching generally occurs outside Literacy lessons, although shared and guided writing also provides additional opportunities for the modelling and monitoring of handwriting.

The Nelson Handwriting font for teaching handwriting.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJ KLMNOPQ RSTUVWXYZ

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

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

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

b g j p q x y z s

Teaching and Learning

Handwriting is a skill which needs to be taught explicitly. Since handwriting is essentially a movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed style by the teacher is very important; it is not sufficient to require pupils to copy models from a published scheme or worksheet. Consistency in the attitudes displayed, the methods employed and the models provided are key to effective learning. A mixture of whole class, small group and individual teaching is planned.

The Role of the Teacher:

- To follow the school policy to help each child develop legible and fluent handwriting
- To have high expectations; valuing work that us the child's best effort
- To provide direct teaching and accurate modelling; on the board, in marking children's work, displays etc.
- To observe pupils, monitor progress and determine targets for development
- To identify left handed children and make sure they have sufficient space in which to work
- To provide appropriate paper and pencils (i.e. all pencils must be sharp and of a reasonable length)
- To encourage children to adopt the correct sitting position in order to write.

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 rest lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor
- Children should 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 pencil. Pencils should be reasonably sharp
- A tripod grip is the most efficient way of holding a pencil

Continuity and Progression

Year Group	Expectations
Nursery	To develop basic movements for letter formation.
Reception	To refine writing movements and begin to form cursive letters.
Year 1	To form cursive letters correctly and begin joining patterns, ensuring ascenders and descenders are clear.
Year 2	To begin simple joins.

Impact

This systematic approach ensures development in the skill of handwriting throughout each year group. Children take pride in their written work and achieve proficiency in their own use of the Nelson script. Outcomes in children's wider curriculum work, as well as in their literacy books and school displays, evidence the progress that children make in this area, as well as the consistency of the approach across the school.

Presentation Guidance

It is essential that all children should have pride in their work and that it is set out well.

- All work must begin with the date. In Literacy this must be written in the following way: Tuesday 9th September 2022. In all other subjects the short date can be written in the following format: 9.9.22
- The date should be written on the top line and underlined (not in the margin). The next line should be missed and an appropriate title should be written.
- Key Stage 1 underlined- as appropriate for ability.
- Underlining should be completed with a ruler.
- Children should write from the margin to the edge of the page.
- Work should be ruled off at the start of the following lesson, leaving the teacher room to comment on the work. Teacher's marking and comments will follow our Marking Policy.
- In Year 1 children will generally begin new work on a new page as appropriate for ability.
- In Year 2 children will rule off after the last piece of work ready to begin new work. Work should be ruled off at the start of the following lesson, leaving the teacher room to comment on the work.
- Rubbers will be used within reason to correct pencil work or one line to cross out a mistake. The teacher will use his/her discretion as to whether children may use erasers.
- Criteria for presentation of work will be discussed prior to commencement of work.
- Pictures should be coloured in pencil or crayons. Felt pens should not be used in exercise books.
- When squared paper is used for Numeracy 1 digit is written in each box and a line is left between each sum.
- In Numeracy an eraser can be used at the teacher's discretion.

Inclusion

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and a specific individual or group programme is drawn up in consultation with the Inclusion Leader. Thicker triangular pencils, pencil grips and wider lines will be used by children experiencing problems writing alongside other activities to develop their fine motor skills.

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;
- pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side;
- 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.

Teachers are alert to the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when they are modelled by a right-handed teacher.

Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

Specific Handwriting Difficulties:

Faulty pencil grip

An overtight pencil grip is the most common fault. Crooking of the forefinger and pressing too hard are common indications of this. Encourage the pupil to relax and to hold the pencil lightly between their thumb and their middle finger, while their forefinger rests lightly on the pencil.

Incorrect letter formation

Children are often able to write letters which are correctly shaped but have been produced by incorrect movements. If bad habits of this kind are allowed to become

ingrained, the child will be seriously hampered when he or she progresses to joined writing. It is important, in the early stages of development, to ensure that:

- All letters are started in the correct place
- In general, movements start at the top and go down
- Ovals are made with an anticlockwise movement.

The Learning Environment

A dedicated writing area is established in all EYFS classrooms. Writing areas/boxes are equipped with a range of writing implements and materials. Throughout all classes teachers display both handwritten and word processed work to give a high profile to developing a neat, legible cursive style

Assessment

Senior leaders should monitor children's writing and presentation in books regularly (at least termly). The following should 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 writing standards achieved by the majority of pupils in line with the National Curriculum?

The Role of Parents and Carers

The Foundation Stage teachers play an important role in communicating this at an early

stage, for example, to ensure that parents are informed and encouraged to offer good models to their pupils by using only capital letters for the beginning of their names, practising drawing patterns together, playing joining up games which encourage left to right directionality. The Foundation Stage teachers, in partnership with the English subject leader, are expected to communicate with pre-school agencies to encourage good practice.

All members of staff (including teaching assistants, supply teachers, students) are provided with appropriate handwriting models and are expected to promote the agreed handwriting style by their own example.

Parental workshops will be held to advise parents on the curriculum and these include the school policy for the teaching of handwriting.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- This will be undertaken by the class teacher and will also be assessed as part of each term's literacy writing assessments.
- When undertaking scrutiny co-ordinators will monitor all subjects for neat presentation and the use of cursive writing.