

# Alverstone Infant School

## Handwriting Policy



### Rationale

The ability to write fluently and legibly gives children a means to communicate their thoughts and ideas efficiently. Cursive handwriting helps children to learn and remember spelling patterns. Children's self-esteem and confidence is increased when they are able to produce well-presented work of which they can be proud.

### Aims

As a school our aims in teaching handwriting are that the pupils will:

- Understand the importance of clear presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively.
- Take pride in the presentation of work, developing handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement.
- Be supported in developing correct spelling quickly through a multisensory approach to handwriting.
- Be able to write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.
- Write legibly in a cursive style with increasing fluency and speed.
- Have a correct pencil grip.
- Form all letters and numbers correctly.
- Know the size and orientation of letters and numbers
- Develop a fluent, comfortable, legible, joined handwriting style.
- When writing cursively, know that all letters start on the line.

### Teaching and Learning

Displayed writing throughout the school should be predominantly cursive but when appropriate include block letters and computer generated writing.

Shared writing should be print in Year R and cursive in Key stage 1.

When marking or writing comments, members of staff use print in Year R and cursive handwriting in Key stage 1.

Handwriting is taught as a discrete subject in all year groups.

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.

Handwriting should be corrected in all curriculum areas which involve writing, not just discretely in the handwriting or phonic session.

Reception children will be given opportunities for pre-writing activities to develop gross and fine motor control, left/right hand eye co-ordination patterns.

Cursive name cards need to be used in Year 1 so that children can see what their name looks like and how the letters of their name are shaped/formed.

### The children are taught to:

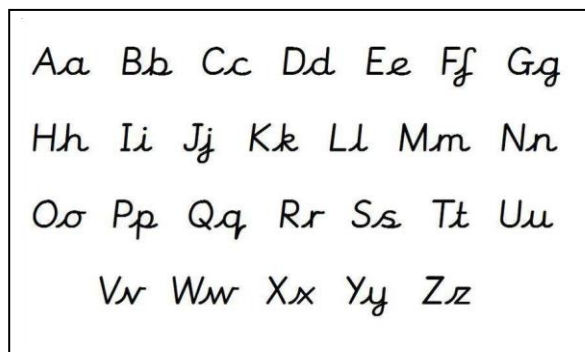
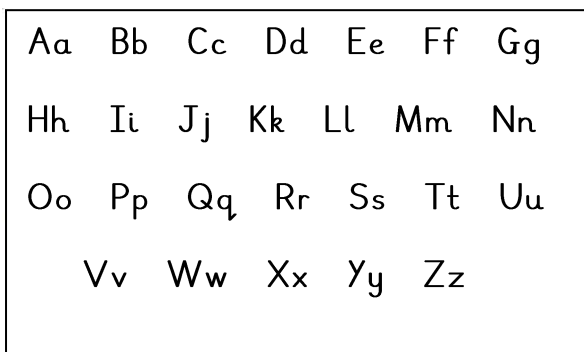
- Develop their fine and gross motor skills with a range of multi-sensory activities
- Practise patterns and free flowing hand motions
- Write both lower case and upper case letters
- Write from left to right and from top to bottom
- Start and finish letters correctly
- Be consistent with the size and shape of letters and the spacing of letters and words
- Sit letters on the line, and ensure that ascenders reach the appropriate height, and that descenders sit below the line.
- Have the correct pencil grip
- Find a convenient position for their page
- Have the correct posture and position
- Have neat legible handwriting for finished, presented work.

### Model

Alverstone Infant School uses the following letter formation

for print:

for cursive:



### The Four Joins

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

### Numbers

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

### Techniques for teaching letter formation

- Model good handwriting all the time
- Demonstrate how to form the letter on the IWB
- 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 round templates
- Write in sand with finger or stick
- Write with pen on whiteboard
- Playdough
- Threading beads on string
- Finger trace the outline of letters on the back of the person in front of you
- Hand-gym activities designed to strengthen finger and hand muscles.
- Activities that encourage gross motor control such as 'Squiggle while you wiggle'

### **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

### **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. A tripod grip tool should be provided for those who find this difficult. It should then be removed once the child no longer needs it.
- Children should be encouraged to use sufficient pressure, too little or too much should be addressed accordingly with other interventions.

### **Equal Opportunities / Inclusion**

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and provision will be made for this. Teachers of children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills should liaise with the SENCo to develop a programme designed for the individual child. This may involve extra handwriting sessions and access to extra resources. Children who find handwriting difficult should be targeted for daily intervention, other areas that could be considered are posture, lighting, angle of table, type of paper used etc. Outside agencies can be contacted where appropriate.

### **Left-handed pupils**

Teachers should be 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 – avoiding elbows knocking.

- left-handed pupils should be encouraged to bring their hands down and round so a hooked, claw like style doesn't develop.
- extra practise with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.
- letters which have a cross-stroke such as T, t and f will be formed slightly differently by left-handers, where the cross is formed right to left rather than left to right.

## **Handwriting progression**

### **Year R**

#### **Autumn 1**

Include movements to enhance gross motor skills such as air-writing, pattern making and squiggle while you wiggle and the letter join animals.

Children should then be taught to improve fine and gross motor skills by drawing pre-cursive patterns in a variety of writing materials such as modelling clay, air writing, sand trays, felt pens, crayons, pencils, IWB, iPads and doing handwriting patterns.

Children should be taught to hold a pencil in an effective manner for writing and any errors in grip should be corrected by November.

#### **Autumn 2**

Begin to introduce letter families using letter join. Include daily practice with different media.

All letters should be correctly formed by February. Assess and correct regularly and provide an intervention group where necessary.

#### **Spring Term**

Phase 2/3 High Frequency Words to be practised. Correct formation secure by April.

There should be intervention groups for children who are not forming letters correctly.

#### **Summer Term**

Phase 3/4 High Frequency Words to be practised and continue with intervention groups.

Capital letters should be taught.

### **Year 1**

#### **Autumn Term**

Joins to be taught in handwriting lessons and rehearsed on handwriting sheets following progression of joins. All writing should be modelled as joined.

Introduce intervention groups for children who are not joining letters correctly.

By the end of the term children should be able to do the correct joins for most letters and key words and high frequency words should be correctly joined.

### **Spring Term**

Practice even sizing of letters with clear ascenders and descenders.

Continue with intervention groups for children who are not joining or sizing their letters correctly.

All writing to be in cursive script by April.

### **Summer Term**

All children to be writing in cursive with any printing to be corrected.

All writing should be in legible cursive script by the end of the year.

### **Year 2**

Continue to assess and refine cursive handwriting.

### **Monitoring and review**

The subject co-ordinator will have responsibility for monitoring the subject. The coordinator will also be responsible for managing resources and supporting staff with the teaching of handwriting. The policy will be reviewed every three years.