



THE HERMITAGE and THE OAKTREE SCHOOLS

Handwriting and Presentation Policy

This document sets out the agreed handwriting and presentation expectations at The Hermitage and The Oaktree schools.

Person responsible: Senior Leadership Team
Date adopted: Summer 2017
Date of last review: Summer 2022
Date of next review: Summer 2024

INTRODUCTION

The Handwriting and Presentation Policy has a central role within The Hermitage School and The Oaktree School curriculums and should be referred to by all members of the school community to ensure consistency.

RATIONALE

Handwriting is a movement skill and should be taught using demonstration, explanation and practice. At our schools, we are very proud of our pupils' handwriting and take particular care with our cursive/joined-up handwriting style. We place importance on the development of this skill throughout a child's time with us. Children need to practise the skill correctly and often. For children to write their ideas fluently, they must be effective transcribers. The National Curriculum advises that by Lower Key Stage 2, children are able to join their handwriting 'throughout their independent writing'. We therefore need to ensure that our cursive scheme supports and develops this. Handwriting is a basic skill that influences the quality of work, composition and spelling throughout the curriculum. Children may miss out on learning opportunities and under-achieve academically if they do not have fluent and legible handwriting.

There is great importance of presentation throughout the curriculum and this policy will also outline the expectations of both children and staff in ensuring that a consistently high standard of presentation is upheld. Children and staff should know the standard they are expected to achieve.

AIMS

The National Curriculum (2014) states that in KS1, children should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation and that by the end of Years 3 and 4, pupils should be taught to:

- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined.
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting; for example, by ensuring that the down-strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch.

The National Curriculum (2014) also states that by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils should be taught to:

- Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:
 - Choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters.
 - Choosing the writing implement and style that is best suited for a task.

The Oaktree and Hermitage schools wants children to:

- Be taught handwriting throughout their time at the school.
- Develop flow and speed in writing using continuous cursive letters.
- Use joined-up handwriting in all of their independent writing.
- Use their skills with confidence.
- Enjoy learning and developing their handwriting with a sense of achievement and pride.
- Use handwriting as an automatic process that does not interfere with creative and mental thinking.
- Understand the importance of neat presentation.

STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

CURSIVE SCHEME

We will use a cursive handwriting scheme to cover all the requirements of the National Curriculum (2014). See Appendix 1.

This scheme will improve quality, speed and stamina of handwriting.

- *Quality*: Ensure letters are consistently sized with equal word spacing and that ascenders and descenders are parallel and do not touch words on the lines above and below.
- *Speed*: Improve speed of handwriting to allow creative writing to take precedence over the task of handwriting and be able to take 'quick notes' at a faster pace.
- *Stamina*: Have the strength and mobility to be able to write for longer periods of time, without fatigue.

Additionally this scheme will allow pupils to have full knowledge and ability of the different forms of handwriting for different purposes:

- Neat, joined, cursive letters for writing passages and large amounts of text, lists and letters.
- Printed or capital letters for posters, notices, headings, labelling, and form filling.

- Speedy handwriting for note-taking and dictation where neatness is not as important and shortcuts, such as + instead of 'and', can be used.

FREQUENCY

Handwriting is a cross-curriculum task and will be taken into consideration during all lessons. Formal teaching of handwriting is to be carried out regularly and systematically to ensure Key Stage targets are met.

KS1 and Lower KS2

- Handwriting tuition will cover:
 - Gross and fine motor skills exercises.
 - Cursive handwriting reinforcement, learning and practice.
 - Numerals, capitals and printed letters: where and when to use, learning and practice.

Years 4 to 6

- More advanced handwriting techniques will be taught:
 - Cursive handwriting reinforcement.
 - Form-filling/labelling using printed and capital letters.
 - Dictation exercises to teach the need for quick notes and speedy handwriting.

ROLE OF THE PUPIL

Children will:

- Use the pencil/pen provided by the school and not any other type.
- Children in KS2 will write in pen for all subjects bar maths and when or where a diagram/graph/table is to be drawn.
- Children will be able to understand and explain the importance of neat handwriting and excellent presentation.

ROLE OF THE TEACHER

For a successful implementation of this policy, the role of the teacher and support staff is extremely important. They will:

- Follow the school policy to help each child develop legible and fluent handwriting and ensure consistency and continuity in the learning and teaching of handwriting across all school years.
- Provide direct teaching and accurate modelling within explicit handwriting sessions.
- Model the high standard of handwriting and presentation by using neat, joined-up cursive writing for all handwriting tasks including marking.
- Model excellent handwriting when teaching writing, using flipchart stands and lined flipchart pads.
- Ensure the correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting is taught (see Appendix 2).
- Provide resources and an environment that promotes good handwriting.
- Observe pupils, monitoring progress and determining targets for development.

- Use the 'diagnostic assessment' to ascertain areas to target (see Appendix 3) for all children whose handwriting needs support.
 - Once all diagnostic assessments are complete, any child who needs to work on any areas should be provided with targeted support.
 - They should continue to be assessed as part of an ongoing process; we will expect this to be done at least every half term.
- Use a 'Quick Wins' approach to support (see section below for guidance).

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

We recognise that some children will need additional support. We will provide this by:

- Carrying out a 'diagnostic assessment' of handwriting to target focus areas (see Appendix 3).
- Using examples of multi-sensory methods such as writing letters in the air and/or using plasticine.
- Using 'Quick Wins' as a Wave 1 intervention,
 - Each week a challenge will be given to the child which involves them having to target one of their handwriting improvement priorities (using the diagnostic assessment).
 - These should be quick fixes e.g. fix the wonky fs this week to achieve a simple, high impact target.
 - These quick fixes should be one small change at a time.
 - Reviews should be built in at the end of the week, which will involve 1-1.5 minutes with the child.
- Praise/house points for improvement shown.
- Providing a suitable type of pen (e.g. Stablio© grip pen) to support grip where appropriate.
- In KS2, move back through the cursive writing scheme to re-teach areas covered in the Foundation, Reception and Key Stage 1 teaching (see Appendix 4) as appropriate.

MONITORING AND CELEBRATING HANDWRITING AND PRESENTATION

It is important to monitor the implementation of this policy. We will do so by:

- Carrying out regular Senior Leadership Team book monitoring where handwriting and presentation is a focus.
- Carrying out book monitoring in staff meetings to ensure consistency.
- Year Team Leaders carrying out book monitoring in Team Planning Meetings.

To encourage the children to implement and sustain excellent handwriting and presentation we will:

- Reward children with stickers and house points when they have demonstrated high standards.
- Use display areas to demonstrate and celebrate children's achievements.

PRESENTATION GUIDANCE:

OVERALL

- The guidance for writing covers all subject areas where handwriting is used.
- Children and teachers use a single line to cross out mistakes or edit writing.
- Teachers challenge poor presentation through constructive verbal feedback.
- In KS2, children use purple pens only for editing, marking or re-doing calculations.
- 'Space is Ace!' ethos: children are to use this ethos when laying out their work e.g. leaving lines between sections such as sub-headings.
- There will be a gap of one line between each paragraph and sub-heading.
- If a piece of writing is not completed to the highest quality then children will be expected to start the work again on a new page.

WRITING

The expectations for writing include:

- All children understanding the school's 'I will...' statements which set out the presentation expectations in child-friendly language, as appropriate to their key stage. For example, these may include:
 - I will rule off the last piece of writing.
 - I will write the long date starting at the margin.
 - I will leave a line and then write the title in the middle of this line.
 - I will make sure that I underline the date and title with a ruler.
- In KS2, the date will be written in long form in all subjects, bar maths.
- All writing will start at the margin and this should be maintained throughout the piece of writing.
- Children's writing will sit on the line, with ascenders and descenders being of sufficient and appropriate height.

MATHS

The expectations for maths include:

- Rule off the last piece of work before starting new work.
- The date should be written in short form (e.g. dd/mm/yy).
- Use one digit per square.
- At KS2, margins are to be two squares in width.
- Writing question numbers in the margin.
- At KS2, corrections should be written out as a new calculation using a purple pen.

WORK FOR DISPLAY

The expectations for display include:

- Any pieces written onto plain paper should use guidelines to support straight writing.
- A title should be written at the top of the piece of work, in the middle of the line and it should be underlined.
- The child's name should be written by the teacher onto the mounting paper.

APPENDIX 1: CURSIVE SCRIPT

Cursive Lower Case 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

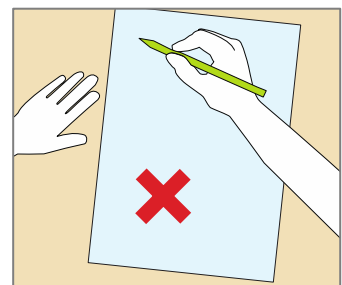
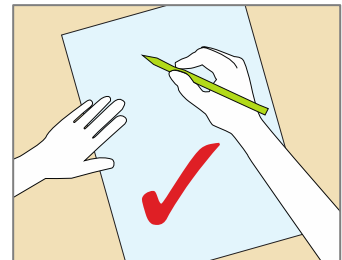
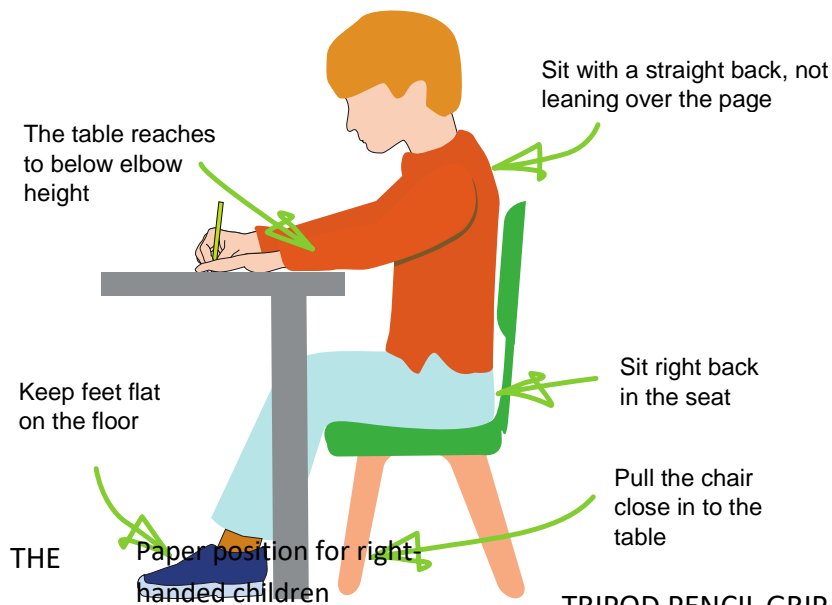
Capital Letters

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

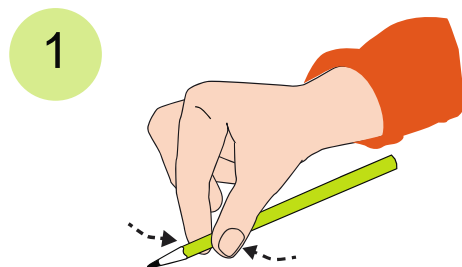
APPENDIX 2: CORRECT POSTURE AND PENCIL GRIP

Pupils should be taught to sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.

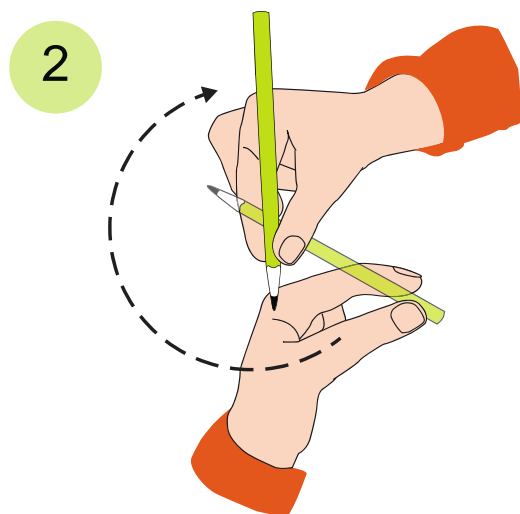
SITTING POSITION



Both right and left handed children should be encouraged to use the tripod grip which allows the pen/pencil to be held securely whilst allowing controlled movements of the pen/pencil nib.

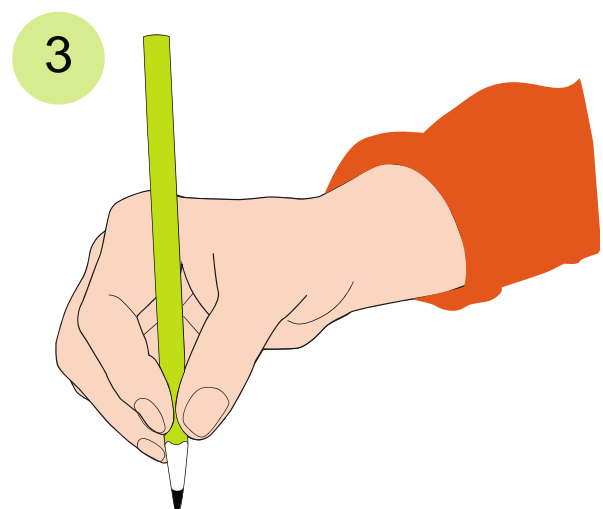


1) Grip the pencil with your index finger and thumb with the nib pointing away.



2) With your free hand, spin the pencil from underneath.

3) Use your middle finger to support the underside of the pencil.

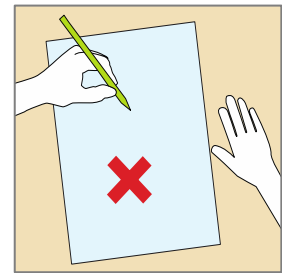
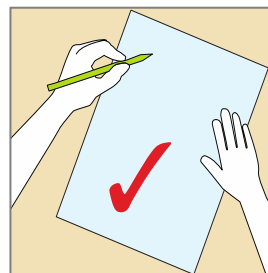


LEFT-HANDED CHILDREN

Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow right-handed teachers as they demonstrate letter formation (and vice versa). Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis.



- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.
- Pupils should position the paper/book to their left side and slanted, as shown.
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision.
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.



Paper position for left-handed children

APPENDIX 3: DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT

A copy of this is to be held within the class Pupil Profile folder.

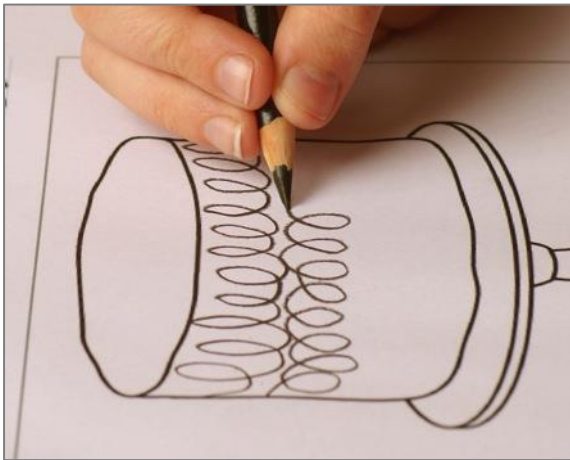
This should be re-evaluated every half-term.

Please complete the evaluation in a different colour each half-term to enable progress to be easily tracked.

Name:	Additional comments:			
Evaluation 1 date and colour used:				
Evaluation 2 date and colour used:				
Evaluation 3 date and colour used:				
Evaluation 4 date and colour used:				
Evaluation 5 date and colour used:				
Evaluation 6 date and colour used:				
Handwriting criteria	Very good	Good enough	Not good enough	Needs serious attention
How neat and consistent are the descenders ? <i>(check the tails on y, g, j, p and q)</i>				
How neat and consistent are the ascenders ? <i>(check the uprights on b, d, h, k, l and t)</i>				
How consistently do the letters sit on the line?				
How consistently to the letters lean in the same direction, and not lean back?				
How consistent is the size of the letters?				
How smooth are the curves? <i>(check the letters b, c, d, e, g, p and q)</i>				
How good is the pen that has been used? <i>(check for blobbing, scratching, fading)</i>				
How joined-up is the writing?				
How well does it flow?				
How neat is the letter f?				
How neat is the letter k?				
How neat is the letter e?				
How neat is the letter s?				
How neat is the letter r?				
Are the dots and crossings done neatly? <i>(check I, j, t and x)</i>				
Are the capital letters in the same style and the right size?				
Are punctuation marks the right size and neat?				
Do the lines keep to the margin?				
Is the lay-out tidy? <i>(check headings, paragraphs and use of space)</i>				
What is the overall impression?				

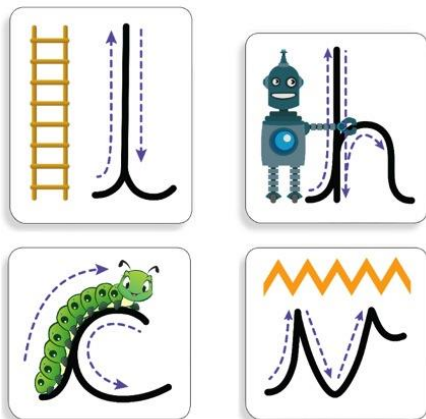
APPENDIX 4: FOUNDATION, RECEPTION AND KEY STAGE 1 TEACHING

FOUNDATION



- Sit in the correct position and hold a pencil correctly to allow fluid movement of the nib.
- Improve fine and gross motor skills by enjoying drawing pre-cursive patterns in a variety of writing materials such as modelling clay, air writing, sand trays, felt pens, crayons, pencils, IWB, iPads/tablets.
- Understand the language needed to describe pencil movements in preparation of letter formation.

RECEPTION



- Hold a pencil in an effective manner for writing and be encouraged to correct any errors in grip or stature.
- Understand that letters are written on a base line and that all cursive letters 'start on the line' and 'end with a hook'.
- Begin to form some recognisable joined-up cursive letters, capital letters and numerals.
- Have an understanding of writing their own name.
- Understanding different shaped letter families.

KEY STAGE 1

- Write legibly using upper and lower case letters with correct joins.
- Ensure that letters sit on the base line and are consistent in size with ascenders and descenders that are the correct length and formation.
- Leave the correct space between words.
- Form capital letters and use where appropriate.
- Form numerals that are consistent in size and sit on the base line.
- Begin to form printed letters and understand when they are to be used.
- Improve the speed of writing and begin to write automatically so promoting creativity in independent writing.

KEY STAGE 2

Improve quality, speed and stamina of handwriting.

- *Quality*: Ensure letters are consistently sized with equal word spacing and that ascenders and descenders are parallel and do not touch words on the lines above and below.
- *Speed*: Improve speed of handwriting to allow creative writing to take precedence over the task of handwriting and be able to take 'quick notes' at a faster pace.
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