**BENWICK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**HANDWRITING POLICY**

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*“Handwriting is a tool that has to work. It must be comfortable, fast and legible.” Angela Webb, Chair, National Handwriting Association*

**Aims**

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

* Experience coherence and continuity in learning and teaching across the Nursery and School
* Develop a recognition and appreciation of pattern and line
* Understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning clearly
* Take pride in the presentation of their work and therefore study handwriting with a sense of enjoyment and achievement.
* Be supported in developing correct spelling quickly through a multi-sensory approach to handwriting
* Be able to write quickly to aid expressing themselves creatively and imaginatively across the curriculum and for a range of purposes.
* Use their skills with confidence in real life situations.
* Develop a fluent, joined handwriting style by the end of Key Stage 2.

Handwriting is part of the new National Curriculum English curriculum.

**Teaching and Learning**

We teach handwriting as a specific skill. All children will receive 20/25 minutes dedicated handwriting practise time a week. This time is to be used for handwriting teaching and practise – ‘warm-up clips’ and ‘posture checks’ will be done outside of this time. Handwriting will also be part of the teaching and learning in other curriculum areas such as Letters and Sounds and cross-curricular writing.

Pen Pals resources can be used as a teaching tool in interactive warm-ups, for posture checks and for teaching input.

Basic structure of a handwriting session:

* Warm-Up Activities (using PenPals)
* Posture Check; feet flat on the floor, back touching the chair
* Either teacher/TA modelled session using PenPals resources
* Independent practise time
* Children will also access opportunities to practise handwriting independently during Guided Reading carousel activities

The progression of handwriting at Benwick takes place over three stages:

**Stage 1** - (to be reached by all children by the end of the Foundation Stage):

Children learn to ‘print’ upper and lower case letters without in and out joins.

**Stage 2** - (to be reached by all children by the end of Key Stage 1):

Children will learn to form letters that use in and out joins. Children will use the four basic joins as described below.

**Stage 3** - (to be reached by all children by the end of Key Stage 2):

Once children are able to form letters that use in and out joins, as well as the four basic joins, they will learn to join letters consistently. Children will learn how to use ‘loops’ to join j, g, y, f (see Appendix A).

The time limits of these Stages are flexible; if a child in Reception is ready to move on to Stage 2, they should not be prevented from doing this. Similarly, if a child in Year 2 is ready to move onto Stage 3, they should not be prevented from doing this.

Progression through formation/ joins within Stages will follow guidelines set out in the PenPals programme.

**The Joining Style (Stage 2 & 3)**

Joins between letters are only worthwhile if they increase the speed, rhythm and ease of writing *without* reducing legibility.

Which letters join? - Joins are made both to and from the following 17 letters:

a b c d e h i k l m n o r t u v w

Within Stage 2, joins are made to but not from the following 8 letters (at Stage 3 children learn how to join from f, g, j and y):

f g j p q s x y

Joins are *never* made **to or from the letter z**

Joins are *never* made **to or from capital letters**

The 4 basic joins:

1. Diagonal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. in
2. Diagonal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. at
3. Horizontal joins to letters without ascenders e.g. on
4. Horizontal joins to letters with ascenders e.g. the ‘eb’ in z-eb-ra

## 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 in Individual Education Plans [I.E.P.’s]. 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 such as pencil grips and thicker writing pencils. Other areas that could be considered are posture, lighting, angle of table etc. Outside agencies can be contacted where appropriate.

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.
* Developing Early Writingpage 161 has further guidance

Teachers are alert to the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Teachers demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

**The Learning Environment**

In all classes, sharpened writing pencils must be available for all writing activities, within handwriting sessions or otherwise. Handwriting pens will be used in Key Stage 2 when the child has developed a legible, joined style. A single horizontal line will be used to cross out mistakes. Children should be exposed to many different styles of writing within their classroom learning environments and around the school, both handwritten and computer generated.

**The contribution of handwriting to other aspects of the curriculum**

**ICT**

The growth in the use of word processing and desktop publishing has increased pupils’ awareness of the importance of presentation and the variety of handwriting styles/fonts available. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate a range of fonts and to select whatever is appropriate to suit particular purposes.

Teachers discuss handwriting and presentation in all subjects and aim to model good handwriting themselves. Teachers are **explicit** about different types of handwriting for example, personal note-taking or best handwriting for presentation, but remember not all the children will be able to achieve this in Key Stage one. Teachers give handwriting a high priority in classroom displays.

Teachers aim to make handwriting lessons relevant to the curriculum, by providing a purpose to the work where possible, encouraging the children to view handwriting as part of an overall presentation policy.

**And for teachers...writing on an interactive whiteboard**

Accurate handwriting using this technology takes practice, and yours needs to be as neat and legible as it would be on an old-fashioned whiteboard. Here are some tips:

* Make sure you can calibrate the board and change the thickness of the pen or stylus.
* Be aware of the legibility of different 'ink' colours. Red, for example, can be hard to read from a distance.
* Press firmly and hold the pen or stylus at a 90o angle.
* Stand to one side of the board when writing so all children can see.
* Explore the templates or gallery in your IWB software — they will include lined and squared paper that will help guide your handwriting and offer a better model.

**Assessment and Recording**

Teachers assess handwriting on a termly basis as part of wider Writing assessments. When marking written work, the school’s marking policy should be observed; feedback, in the form of Moving On Comments, must relate the LO (learning objective). However, verbal feedback can be given on handwriting as part of the Assessment for Learning (AfL) process. Handwriting cups are awarded to a KS1 and KS2 child who has improved handwriting during the week, in our celebration assembly.

**Review**

This policy will be reviewed biennially in line with the school’s policy review programme. The subject leader is responsible for reporting to the governing body about the quality of its implementation and its impact on standards. In the light of this, policy amendments may be made.

# Equal Opportunities

We ensure that each individual child receives an equal learning experience regardless of ability, culture and gender.

Agreed and adopted by the governing body on:

Signed………………………………………………………………………………………….…………………………Chair of Governors

**Appendix A**

The progression of formation/ joins through Key Stage 1 and 2.

**Year 1**

1. Letter formation practice: long ladder family
2. Letter formation practice: one-armed robot family
3. Letter formation practice: curly caterpillar family
4. Letter formation practice: zig-zag monster family
5. Practising the vowels: i
6. Practising the vowels: u
7. Practising the vowels: a
8. Practising the vowels: o
9. Practising the vowels: e
10. Letter formation practice: capital letters
11. Introducing diagonal join to ascender: at, all
12. Practising diagonal join to ascender: th
13. Practising diagonal join to ascender: ch
14. Practising diagonal join to ascender: cl
15. Practising diagonal join to ascender: in, im
16. Practising diagonal join to ascender: cr, tr, dr
17. Practising diagonal join to ascender: lp,mp
18. Introducing diagonal join to an anticlockwise letter: id, ig

**Year 2**

1. Practising diagonal join to ascender: eel, eet
2. Practising diagonal join, no ascender: a\_e
3. Practising diagonal join, no ascender: anticlockwise: ice, ide
4. Practising horizontal join, no ascender: ow, ou
5. Practising horizontal join, no ascender: oy, oi
6. Practising horizontal join, no ascender anticlockwise: oa, ode
7. Practising horizontal join to ascender: ole, obe
8. Practising horizontal join to ascender: ook, ool
9. Practising diagonal join to r: ir, ur, er
10. Practising horizontal join to r: or, oor
11. Introducing horizontal join from r to ascender: url, irl, irt
12. Introducing horizontal join from r: ere
13. Practising joining to and from r: air
14. Introducing diagonal join to s: dis
15. Introducing horizontal join to s: wa
16. Introducing diagonal join from s to ascender: sh
17. Introducing diagonal join from s, no ascender: si, se, sp
18. Introducing horizontal join from r to an anticlockwise: rs
19. Practising diagonal join to an anticlockwise letter: ea, ear

**Year 3**

1. Revising joins in a word: le
2. Revising joins in a word: ing
3. Revising joins in a word: un, de
4. Revising joins to and from s: dis
5. Revising joins to and from r: re, pre
6. Introducing joining b and p: bi, pu
7. Practising joining b and p: ba, po
8. Practising joining b and p: bl, ph
9. Relative size and consistency: ly, less, ful
10. Relative size and consistency: capitals
11. Speed and fluency practice: er, est
12. Consistency in spacing : mis, anti, ex
13. Consistency in spacing : non, co
14. Consistency in spacing : apostrophes
15. Layout, speed and fluency in practice: address
16. Layout, speed and fluency in practice: dialogue
17. Layout, speed and fluency in practice: poem
18. Layout, speed and fluency in practice: letter

**Year 4**

1. Revising joins in a word: ness, ship
2. Revising joins in a word: ing, ed
3. Revising joins in a word: s
4. Revising joins in a word: ify
5. Revising joins in a word: nn, mm, ss
6. Revising parallel ascenders: tt, ll, bb
7. Revising parallel ascenders and descenders: pp. ff
8. Revising joins to an anticlockwise letter: cc, dd
9. Parallel ascenders: al, ad, af
10. Parallel descenders and break letters: ight, ough
11. Size, proportion and spacing: ious
12. Size, proportion and spacing: able, ful
13. Size, proportion and spacing: fs, ves
14. Size, proportion and spacing: v, k
15. Size, proportion and spacing: ic, ist
16. Size, proportion and spacing: ion
17. Size, proportion and spacing: contractions
18. Speed and fluency: ible, able

**Year 5 & 6**

1. Letter formation: i family
2. Letter formation: r family
3. Letter formation: c family
4. Letter formation: z family
5. Letter formation: L family
6. Letter formation: R family
7. Letter formation: C family
8. Letter formation: Z family
9. Letter formation at speed: inappropriate closing or not closing
10. Number formation: numbers 0 to 9
11. Joining: diagonal joins
12. Joining: horizontal joins
13. Joining: tricky joins
14. Joining at speed: inappropriate closing or not closing
15. Joining at speed: variations on f, g, s, t, y
16. Joining at speed variations on j, v, w, x, z
17. Letter size: consistency of lower case letters
18. Letter size: comparison of lower case letters with and without ascenders and descenders
19. Letter size: comparison of lower case letters and capital letters
20. Letter orientation: writing on the baseline
21. Letter orientation: ascenders and descenders
22. Spacing between letters
23. Spacing between words
24. Parallels: upright ascenders and descenders
25. Parallels: sloping ascenders and descenders