



# **Trent Vale Infant and Nursery School**

*and*

# **Beeston Rylands Junior School**



## **POLICY FOR HANDWRITING**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- **THIS DOCUMENT IS** a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of handwriting at Trent Vale Infant and Nursery School and Beeston Rylands Junior School.
- **IT WAS DEVELOPED** in April 2007 through a process of consultation with English Subject Leaders and teaching staff
- IT WILL BE continuously reviewed, updated and approved by the Governing Bodies, Headteacher and English Subject Leaders
- This policy will be REVIEWED ANNUALLY

Date of review	Summer 2016	Autumn 2017	Autumn 2018
Signed			

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF HANDWRITING**

At Trent Vale Infant and Nursery & Beeston Rylands we recognise that 'the ability to write clearly, quickly and legibly affects the quality of a child's written output, for difficulties with handwriting can hamper his flow of thoughts and limit his fluency' (Bullock report). The technique of handwriting is a skill that is not just acquired but must be taught. We know that handwriting and its associated skills should become automatic. For this to take place, practice and feedback are necessary.

### **OUR AIMS IN TEACHING HANDWRITING**

Part of our overall aim is that by the end of Key Stage 2 our children will have fluent and legible handwriting we also aim:

- to help individual children develop a handwriting style using a set handwriting pattern to the best of their ability and age;
- that by the time the children reach the end of the primary school the individualised handwriting style should be easy to read, pleasant to look at, quick to write and satisfying to the writer. They should be accustomed to writing using both pencil and pen on a variety of writing surfaces.

## **STRATEGIES FOR THE TEACHING OF HANDWRITING**

These are strategies for improving the handwriting of individual children.

1. A poor pencil grip can affect not only the handwriting but also the handwriting position. Correct holding of the pen or pencil can be achieved by picking up the pencil that is pointing towards the child's body and turning it over to lie between the thumb and the forefinger. Triangular pencil grips and triangular pencils can help to prevent bad habits developing.
2. Sitting position. Encourage the child to sit comfortable, facing the desk with the non-writing hand placed on the paper.
3. Paper position. The paper can be tilted left side down for the right hander and right side down for the left hander.
4. Line guides. When using unlined paper encourage the child to use a line guide underneath their work.
5. Encouragement in achieving constancy of letter shape, size and spacing. Progression in spacing corresponds with improvements in co-ordination, progressing from finger spacing to one letter space between each word.
6. Left-handers. See attached sheet entitled 'Some suggestions for helping left handed writers'.

The schools uses the Startwrite 2 and KBR 'from the line font' that is detailed at the end of this policy.

### **Trent Vale Infant and Nursery**

From Foundation 1 and Foundation 2 children will be shown how to form their letters correctly (see appendix 1). This will appear as non-cursive to allow children to see letters clearly. Children will be taught how to write their names, cvc words, bear words and simple sentences using the correct non cursive formation.

When writing sentences on the board, from Foundation 2, adults will use both cursive and non-cursive script. This will give children the opportunity to see writing joined up without the pressure of achieving this themselves.

From Year 1, all children will be shown how to form cursive script and will have handwriting sessions throughout the year to practise this. Children will be encouraged to join their letters when they are ready to do so.

This handwriting will continue to be taught throughout Y2 and throughout key stage 2 with more emphasis on consistent height and width, parallel ascenders and descenders, writing on the line: - all leading to fluent cursive writing.

In our formal teaching of handwriting, which takes place with the class teacher/ small groups with TA's, we will teach groups of letters according to how they are formed. Joined handwriting will be introduced when the majority of children in Y1 form their letters correctly.

All Y2 children will be taught joined handwriting.

## **Beeston Rylands Junior School**

Beeston Rylands will continue to teach the same handwriting script taught at Trent Vale as children enter into Year 3.

In Years 3 and 4, handwriting foci will be in line with the National Curriculum objectives encouraging children 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 unjoined.
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting [for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch].
- Use joined writing fast enough to keep pace with what they want to say.
- Use joined handwriting throughout their independent writing.
- Use handwriting to support their composition and spelling.

In Years 5 and 6 handwriting focuses will be in line with the National Curriculum objectives encouraging children 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 that is best suited for a task: for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version.
- Use an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form.

Children in years 5 and 6 also have the opportunity to use handwriting pens, emphasising good presentation and encouraging them to take care with what they are writing.

## **ASSESSMENT, TARGET SETTING, MARKING AND RECORD KEEPING**

Feedback is most important and comes from both the teacher and the child as they assess their own progress. Further progress can be achieved by encouraging the child to become more observant by highlighting specific aspects. This could include uniformity of:

- letter formation
- letter size
- spacing between words
- spacing between letters
- slope of letters and angle of links
- heights of ascenders
- length of descenders
- writing in straight lines
- words sitting on the line

Other points to feedback on include:

- inclusion of letter links
- letters in too close proximity
- untidy appearance with crossings-out
- varying styles in one passage
- a style developing
- children's comments on their own writing
- children's writing worthy of note in class.

## **TIME ALLOCATION**

At Trent Vale Infant and Nursery School children will spend formal time each week on letter formation and handwriting practice using various implements appropriate to the level and standard of the child's handwriting.

Year 2 – Four afternoon sessions per week (Duration 10/15 mins)

Year 1 – Four afternoon sessions per week (Duration 10/15 mins)

Foundation 2 – Two afternoon sessions per week (once most children have achieved Bear words 1 to 7)

At Beeston Rylands we will allocate at least two 15 minute sessions for teaching and practising handwriting in Years 3 and 4.

Handwriting will not necessarily be taught discretely in years 5 and 6, but as an integral part of writing linked to the National Curriculum objectives. Interventions may be used to further support groups of children identified by class teachers.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

This information is in the monitoring and evaluation policy.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

- We endeavour to support the learning of all pupils in school and plan with an awareness of each school's **Special Educational Needs Policy** and **Teaching and Learning Policy**.
- Activities will be provided, appropriate to pupil's individual needs and abilities.
- Activities will be differentiated by task and outcome.
- 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.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

- Each pupil should have equal access to the handwriting curriculum regardless of gender, race and individual educational needs.
- Pupils should have opportunities to consider their own attitudes and values, and those of other people with respect.
- Our aim is to provide a balanced, gendered, multicultural approach to handwriting in order to widen pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Care will be taken to avoid negative stereotyping and the promotion of positive attitudes and values to differing cultures and peoples will be encouraged.

## **RESOURCES**

Startwrite 2. We follow all formation, from the line, except for: - X, Z. Please see the example on the next page.

TV & BRJS will continue to use KBR resources where appropriate.

Coordinators will continue to look for interactive smart board resources to teach handwriting.

## **OTHER POLICY DOCUMENTS THAT UNDERPIN THIS POLICY FOR HANDWRITING**

- EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY
- EQUALITY POLICY
- ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING POLICY
- SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY
- EAL POLICY
- CURRICULUM POLICY AND FRAMEWORK
- TEACHING AND LEARNING POLICY
- CURRICULUM PLANNING POLICY
- MARKING AND FEEDBACK POLICY
- MONITORING AND EVALUATION POLICY
- HOMEWORK POLICY

## **Appendix 1**

### **Groups of letters according to how they are formed.**

#### **Anti clockwise circular movement**

a, c, o, s, g, q, d

#### **Anti clockwise loops**

e, f

#### **Downward vertical movement**

i, u, j, y, l, t

#### **Downward movement and reverse direction to lead into a clockwise curve.**

m, n, r, p, b, h, k

#### **Straight lines using diagonal movements.**

v, w

#### **The remainder**

x, z

#### **Capital Letters.**

It is best to introduce capital letters once children are fairly confident with the formations of the lower case letters. In Startwrite 2 all the fonts have capital letters that are formed the same way and none of them join in the cursive scripts.

#### **From the line Font – Joining letters.**

Once children have practised forming the individual letters in the first two or three of the above groups, they should quickly progress to joining letters making two or three letter combinations to spell familiar words.

Words in rhyming families are good to use for handwriting practise because, if the rime is spelt the same in all the words its repetition reinforces that letter formations and the spelling. Lists of words that have the same initial consonant(s) or have the same middle vowel(s) can also provide excellent practise for both handwriting and spelling patterns.

There are only two types of joins as follows:

#### **Diagonal joins**

a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, s, t, u, x, y, z

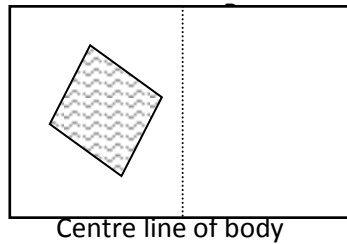
#### **Horizontal joins**

o, r, v, w

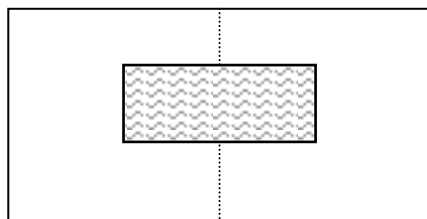
## Some suggestions for helping LEFT HANDED WRITERS

1. Position of paper in relation to the desk and writer

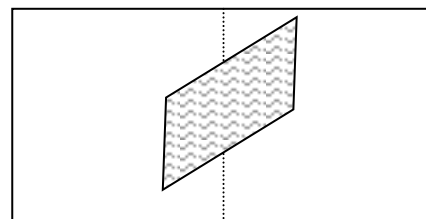
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2. The correct position for left handers is with the paper to the left of the body and left inclined. Thus, at the end of the first line of writing, the pen still be slightly to the left of the mid line. The cramped position caused by the arm necessarily moving towards the body (because we write from left to right) is therefore partially eliminated; so is the backward slope and the tendency to smudge.
3. Type of Pen: the pushing and pulling movement which a left hander makes of necessity, means that writing with an ordinary pen nib is extremely difficult, the pen tending to snag on the up strokes. Left handers should have a broader, more flexible nib, preferably with a turned up point, or a nib cut with a reverse oblique point. Fountain pens with inter- changeable nibs are very suitable, especially if the nib has a slightly bulbous point. Ball point pens are probably the best solution of all.
4. Grip of pen: for the left handers the grip should be at least 25 - 40 mm from the point. This ensures that the hand is well clear of the stems of letters, so that the child can see what he is writing and avoid smudging. The grip should not be too tight as this increases tension and fatigue.
5. Seating: Where a left hander is sitting next to a right hander, care should be taken that both children have their writing hands on the OUTSIDE of the pair; otherwise, both children will have difficulty in writing freely as their elbows collide at frequent intervals.
6. Right handed writers: if the following two diagrams are studied carefully the difficulties experienced by left handed children who copy the paper positioned for right handers become vividly apparent.



Centre line of body



Centre line of body

Finally, it is obvious that the earlier left handed children are identified the quicker their writing difficulties will be resolved, and the children in reception, year 1 and year 2 should be given particular attention at this time.

(These suggestions are freely adapted from 'Lefthandedness' by M. M. Clark, U.L.P.)

## Trent Vale Letter Patter—lower case

### Anti-clockwise movements - Caterpillar letters

All developed from the basic letter 'c'

- c start at the top, round for the curly c
- o start at the top, round like a curly c and back to the top
- a start at the top, round like a curly c, up to the top, down and flick
- d start at the top, round like a curly c, up up to the top, down and flick
- g start at the top, round like a curly c, up to the top, down and curl
- q start at the top, round like a curly c, up to the top, down and flick
- f start at the top, round like a curly c, and down and hook at the bottom. Go across
- S start at the top, curl and curl.

### Down, up and over movements - One armed robot letters

All developed from the basic letter 'h'

- h start at the top, down, back up half way, over and flick
- r start at the top, down, back up and hook over
- n start at the top, down, back up, and over, down with a flick
- m start at the top, down, back up, and over, up and over, down with a flick
- b start at the top, down, back up half way, over and round for the tummy
- p start at the top, down, down, up, up, over and round
- k start at the top, down, pen off, find the middle line up, pen off, find the middle line down

### Mainly down and flick movements—Ladder letters

All developed from the basic letter 'i'

- i start at the top, down and flick and dot
- l start at the top, down, down and flick
- t start at the top, down, down and flick, go across
- j start at the top, down, down and round and dot
- u start at the top, down round and up, down and a flick
- y start at the top, down round and up, down for the long tail

### Diagonal movements—Zig zag monster letters

All developed from the basic letter 'v'

- v start at the top, down, up
- w start at the top, down, up, down, up
- x start at the top, down, stop. Start at the top, down, stop.
- Z start at the top, across, down, across

### Others

- e start in the middle, straight across, up and around



## Trent Vale Letter Patter—lower case, cursive script

### From the line rock over and back, on the line

a - from the line rock over and back to the top, down and flick

d - from the line rock over and back to the top top top down and flick

o - from the line rock over and back to the top and make a join.

c - from the line rock over and back

s - from the line rock over and back, curve it round, make a join.

### From the line rock over and back, below the line

g - from the line rock over and back, to the top, down, under, curl and flick

q - from the line rock over and back, to the top, straight diagonal line, back up, make a join

### From the line climb and slide, on the line

l - from the line climb and slide

t - from the line climb and slide, pen off and go across

h - from the line climb and slide back up half way and over

b - from the line climb and slide back up half way, round and make a join

i - from the line climb and slide and dot

r - from the line climb and slide back up and hook over

k - from the line climb and slide back up and round and kick

m - from the line climb and slide back up, over and over

n - from the line climb and slide back up and over

u - from the line climb and slide, curve under, up, down and flick

W - from the line climb, down, up, down, up, make a join.

V - from the line climb, down, up, make a join.

### From the line climb and slide, below the line

y - from the line climb and slide, curve under, up, down down, curl and flick.

j - from the line climb and slide straight down, curl and flick and dot

P - from the line climb and slide straight down, back up, around and make a join

f - from the line climb, curve round, straight down, curve round and up

### Others

Z - from the line climb, across the top, down and across.

X - from the line climb, slide diagonally, pen off, slide diagonally

e - from the line curve round and round