

Handwriting Expectations

At Eastbury Community School, handwriting is a taught skill and it is important that teachers are seen to put a high value on teaching and sustaining good handwriting. We believe that pupil's self-esteem and pride in their work can be raised by good quality presentation.

The school uses are currently piloting different scheme to teach handwriting. We will soon choose the most appropriate scheme to ensure handwriting is caught in a consistent manner across the school.

Our Aim

To ensure that we:

- have a consistent standard and manageable practices;
- model high standards of handwriting and presentation;
- support pupils to develop legible handwriting in both joined up and printed styles;
- support pupils to understand the importance of, and develop pride in, clear, neat presentation in order to communicate their meaning effectively.

The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all staff and is overseen by the Phase Leaders.

Expectations Foundation Stage (4-5 years old)

- Use a pencil and hold it effectively to form recognisable letters, most of which are formed correctly.
- Start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters

Key Stage One (5-7 years old)

- sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly
- begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place with diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters
- form capital letters
- form digits 0-9
- understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.

Year 2

- form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- Further practise using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined
- write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters
- use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

Lower KS2 (Year 3 & 4)

- 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 down strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch).

Upper KS2 (Year 5 & 6)

- 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.

Principles of teaching handwriting

The school follows a cursive handwriting approach. All adults are expected to use cursive handwriting at all times (i.e. when marking books and on the whiteboard). All pupils are expected to attempt to use cursive handwriting at all times.

There are 4 simple rules to cursive handwriting:

Rule 1: Start every letter on the line (entrance stroke)

Rule 2: Do not take your pen or pencil off the paper until you have finished the word

Rule 3: Finish every letter on the line (exit stroke)

Rule 4: Do not join capital letters.

Handwriting may be taught to the whole class in short, sharp bursts or to small groups according to the needs of the pupil. Links should be made to handwriting in all lessons, particularly when teaching spelling patterns and English.

The teaching of handwriting should include consideration given to posture, paper position, left handedness, pencil grip, letter formation and terminology.

The pupil should be taught the skills of handwriting through the following developmental stages:

1. The ability to produce writing patterns that are consistent in height and width.
2. The ability to write each letter in print with reasonable speed, ensuring regularity of size and spacing and consideration of ascenders and descenders.
3. The ability to produce joined up writing.
4. An individualised style.

Differentiation and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Once identified, pupils with special education needs which impact upon their writing will be assessed and the appropriate action taken (see SEND and Inclusion Policies). Pupil with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia or dyspraxia and pupil with a disability which affects their fine motor control will find handwriting particularly challenging. Strategies to help support pupils who are having difficulties with handwriting include:

- use of a pencil grip;
- use of a writing slope;
- a choice of different types of pen, pencil, crayon or chalk;
- paper with larger/bolder lines or squares;
- coloured paper;
- an extended time to write;
- use of ICT including dictaphones/microphones.

Appendix 1

Pen Licence Checklist – Key Stage 2

To earn a pen licence:

- your writing in all your books must show the following consistently:
- All letters are correctly formed.
- All short letters are the same size.
- All ascenders and descenders are the right height/length.
- All letters are joined correctly.
- Capital letters are bigger than lower case letters.
- Spaces between letters are the right size (not too squashed or stretched).
- Spaces between words are the right size (not too small or big).
- Date and title are underlined with a ruler.
- Work looks neat.

Teacher note

- It is advised to assess at least two pieces of big writing using the above checklist to ensure consistency before issuing a child with a pen licence.
- Pen licences may be taken away if a child's handwriting drops below expectations.
- Pens should only be used during Literacy lessons.