



# Corringham Primary School

(Including: Corringham Primary Pre-School and Speech and Language Enhanced Provision)

# Handwriting Policy

## Date

<b>Developed:</b>	<b>Summer 2014</b>
<b>Adopted:</b>	<b>Autumn 2015</b>
<b>Reviewed and Adopted:</b>	<b>Autumn 2015</b>
<b>Next review:</b>	<b>Autumn 2018</b>

## Handwriting Guidance Rationale

**“True ease in handwriting comes from art not chance  
As those who move easiest have learned to dance”  
Alexander Pope (1688-1744)**

The purpose of teaching handwriting is to enable all children to leave Corringham Primary School with a neat, fluent and joined style of handwriting. This will ensure that children take pride in their work, value their writing and build their self-esteem. Systematic teaching (and not practise alone) will enable confidence and developing skill levels as the children move through the school. When good handwriting becomes second nature, children are able to focus more of their attention on the content of their writing, allowing them to record and communicate their ideas with speed and without restraint.

### Aims:

- To embed continuity and coherence across the school thus establishing a systematic and consistent writing style
- To highlight the schools approach to this subject through a systematic teaching programme to be strongly adhered to and valued by all
- To endeavour that all children have an attractive style of writing this will make them feel pride and pleasure in the standard and appearance of their work

### School Handwriting Script

Corringham Primary School (CPS) has adopted the Cambridge Penpals handwriting scheme. Please see the teacher guides or the CD ROMs for further details of progression, letter formation, joins etc. If a child shows a natural inclination to slope their letters then this will be supported.

### Teaching Correct Posture and Grip

Good posture should be taught and modelled by the teacher. It involves:

- Having a table and chair of the correct height so that their feet are firmly on the ground with feet flat on the floor. Their legs should not hit the desk
- There being sufficient room on the table for the child to be able to angle their paper and use their non-writing hand to steady the



paper and bear some body weight. Also they should have sufficient space to work without jostling their neighbour

- The child having sufficient light to see what he/she is writing and have a clear view of the teacher/board so they can easily copy the handwriting being modelled
- Children sitting up fairly straight at the table and shouldn't have to stretch or slouch to reach the paper
- Children not being seated on the carpet, balancing writing materials on their knees

Good grip should be taught and modelled by the teacher. It involves:

- Maintaining a controlled but relaxed grip so that tension does not build up in the arm resulting in increased pressure on the paper which will inhibit free flowing movement
- Holding the pen between the thumb and forefinger with the pen resting on the third finger
- Holding the pen about 1.5 – 2.5 cm away from the end of the pen. Holding the pen too far or too near the nib will result in poor control

Where children are struggling with grip or letter formation teachers are to liaise with the Inclusion Manager for assistance. Please see the Penpals guidance on the developmental stages of holding and gripping writing materials.

### **Left-Handed Writers**

Approximately 10% of the population are left-handed. Left-handed children are equally capable of producing neat handwriting, following a few simple adjustments:

- Model the practise movements, sitting position and grip for left-handed children. Make sure you model with your left hand so that they do not have to try to make mental rehearsals of the movements
- Position left-handed children on the ends of tables, so that they do not clash elbows with right-handed writers, or sat next to another left-handed writer
- Some left-handed children like to be on a higher chair or cushion so that they can see over their hand at what they are writing

- Writing from left to right is more difficult for left-handed writers so more time/support should be allocated to them so that incorrect letter formations, posture and grip are not over-learnt
- Put a mark at the left side of the page to remind left-handed children where to start writing
- Those children who have progressed to pen may use biro if 'wet' ink smudges

For further guidance, see the Penpals teacher guides.

### **Writing Implements at CPS**

A variety of activities for developing gross and fine motor skills should be encouraged in the Foundation Stage and children should be encouraged to use a variety of writing implements, including using their fingers in sand trays and sky writing. When they start to practise letter formation on paper, a pencil will be the most common implement.

As the children move into Year 1 the use of pencil will be continued. When children are ready, they will be able to write in a black, fibre-tip or roller-ball pen. This will be determined by stage and not age, but it is expected that the majority of children will be writing with pen by the end of Year 4.

#### **Foundation Stage Pre-School/Reception Pre—writing skills**

Develop and strengthen gross motor skills especially muscles in the shoulder, arm, wrist and hand this is to be done through exploring space, direction and using the whole body.

Develop and strengthen fine motor control incorporating a range of multisensory activities including:

- Threading
- constructional apparatus
- pegboards
- sewing and weaving
- tracing
- stencils
- colouring
- painting
- scissor skills
- experimenting with a range of implements e.g. pens, pencils, crayons, felt tips, chalk, interactive whiteboard, sticks, paints, water
- use a selection of materials e.g. shaving foam, mud, wet/dry sand, water

- Malleable materials
- Sandpaper and other tactile letter and number shapes
- Finger and counting rhymes
- Sky patterns and letters are done with a range of objects including sticks and scarves

### **Formal writing in Pre-School/Reception**

This is started when teachers feel that the children have a specific amount of pencil control and established hand preference.

- children are taught where to start their letters and numbers and the correct place to finish
- they follow the Letter and Sound programme linking writing with Phonics
- parents are given a copy of the correct letter formation and number sheets at the new Parents Information sessions which are held in the Autumn term
- numbers are taught alongside the teaching of capital letters discretely

### **Key Stage 1**

#### **Year 1**

- Children in Year 1 with developing fine motor control are encouraged to continue with the prewriting skills that the children in Reception encounter
- Formal handwriting is taught
- Follow the Letter and Sound programme linking writing with Phonics
- Sharp thin pencils are used
- Children who are ready will start to join letters
- They will do their handwriting in a designated handwriting book using tram lines to begin with
- Formal handwriting skills will be taught for 10 minutes daily.

#### **Year 2**

- Children have formal handwriting
- Follow the Letter and Sound programme linking writing with Phonics
- They use sharp thin pencils

- By the end of Year 2 the children will have been taught all connections and correct number formation
- Formal handwriting skills will be taught for 10 minutes daily.

## **Key Stage 2**

In Key Stage 2 the children will require different levels of writing for different purposes:

- a very fast hand for personal notes
- a clear but quick hand for general use
- formal hand for special occasions.

The second priority after legibility is speed, because speed of writing has been shown to influence spelling. The simple cursive style is ideal for the purpose of writing quickly.

From the beginning of Key Stage 2, the children will be taught to develop legible handwriting in both joined up and printed styles. Formal handwriting skills will be taught throughout Key Stage 2, for 10 minutes daily.

As the children move towards the end of the primary phase, it is intended that they will be encouraged, on the basis of a secure foundation, to begin to break away from the taught model and to develop a more personal style. This should happen naturally where the children have mastered skills taught, as an indication of the writer's confidence and maturity.

### **Teaching Process and Environment**

The teaching of handwriting will take place at least once a week for approximately 25 minutes, depending on the stage and age of the children and their concentration span. In the Foundation Stage handwriting will be taught more frequently within shorter sessions. The session will start with gross and fine motor warm-up exercises and then proceed to practising shapes and patterns. The teacher will model letter formation etc. and then the children will have the opportunity to practise, under adult supervision so that errors and misconceptions can be addressed quickly and the over-learning of errors avoided. Further independent practise sessions can be timetabled in during the week. Please see the Penpals scheme for more details of the suggested structure of the sessions.

The teacher should provide a print-rich environment in the classroom, where signs and labels are handwritten, or typed, using the school font. It is crucial that the staff model the correct formation of handwriting at all times, including when recording written comments in pupils' books which should model the correct style and use of pen. A copy of the correct letter formation should be accessible to the children.

Handwriting, although taught as a discrete session, can be used to support the teaching of spelling and other curriculum work. It should not be practised in a separate 'Handwriting Book' as this gives the impression that it is detached from other writing. It is preferable to carry out practice activities in their normal 'Writing' book so it will set the benchmark for all presentation. Links with spelling can be made explicitly to the children, especially when teaching diagraphs etc.

Displays of excellent children's handwriting should be used for class displays. The children need to see that quality handwriting and good presentation are skills valued within the school.

### **Teacher Expectations**

Teacher expectations are crucial in securing high standards of handwriting in all written work across the curriculum. Children should have a handwriting target (see later section) that should be applied across the whole of their written work. Staff should not accept less than a child's best.

### **ICT and Handwriting**

Children are taught to use a variety of packages to word process and manipulate text. They are taught to experiment with different layouts and font styles and sizes and assess their impact on their audience. The teaching of typing skills is included in the curriculum.

Although children are given opportunities to produce presentational work using ICT they must still be taught the skills associated with good graphic design on paper.

# Handwriting Joins

Diagonal join to ascender

ab bh ef pk tl st ij

Diagonal join, no ascender

ae cm kr mo qu lv hy

Horizontal join, no ascender

fo rp wa vp ou

Horizontal join, to ascender

oh rk wb fh

Progression of Joins

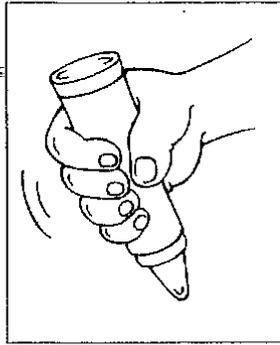
Year R	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4-6
boat	boat	boat	boat	boat
raisin	raisin	raisin	raisin	raisin
sunny	sunny	sunny	sunny	sunny
growing	growing	growing	growing	* growing
fresh	fresh	fresh	fresh	fresh
misjudged	misjudged	misjudged	misjudged	* misjudged
graffiti	graffiti	graffiti	graffiti	* graffiti
xenophobia	xenophobia	xenophobia	xenophobia	xenophobia

\* loops are discussed with the children

# Developmental levels of pencil hold

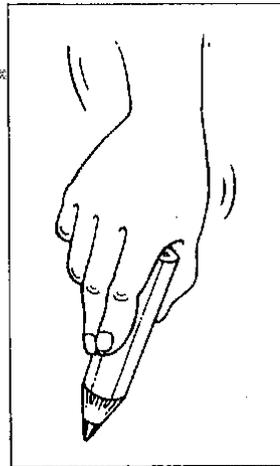
*\*Ages are approximate*

1–2 years



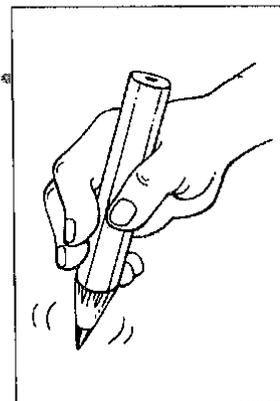
- Held with fistful hand.
- Arm moves as a unit.

2–3 years



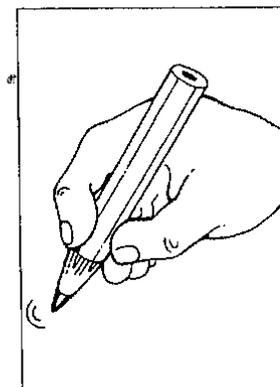
- Held with fingers.
- Forearm moves as a unit.

3–4 years



- Held with crude approximation of thumb, index and middle fingers.
- Hand moves as a unit.

4–6 years



- Held with precise opposition of thumb, index and middle fingers.
- Fine, localised movements of finger joints. (Test by drawing circles.)

## Foundation Stage 2

*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*

**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**

