

**Gossey Lane Academy**  
**Handwriting Policy- Reviewed 2020**

Here at Gossey Lane Academy we are very proud of our pupil's handwriting and take particular care in our cursive/joined-up handwriting style. We use Letter-join as the basis of our handwriting policy that covers all the requirements of the 2014 National Curriculum.

Handwriting is a basic skill that influences the quality of work throughout the curriculum. At the end of Key Stage 2 all pupils should have the ability to produce fluent, legible and, eventually, speedy joined-up handwriting, and to understand the different forms of handwriting used for different purposes.

We aim to make handwriting an automatic process that does not interfere with creative and mental thinking.

**Aims**

- To know the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively.
- To write legibly in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency by:
- Have the correct pencil grip
- Knowing that all letters start from the top, except d and e which start in the middle
- Forming all letters correctly including descenders
- Knowing the size and orientation of letters.

We aim for our pupils to develop a neat, legible, speedy handwriting style using continuous cursive letters that leads to producing letters and words automatically in independent writing.

By the end of Year 6 pupils will understand the importance of neat presentation and the need for different letterforms (cursive, printed or capital letters) to help communicate meaning clearly.

### **Non-negotiables for a handwriting.**

- Staff will model the correct formation of letters at all times.
- Staff will use incidental teaching moments to reinforce letter formation/joins.
- Handwriting standards should be high across all subject areas and will be monitored

### **Teaching Time**

Handwriting is taught as follows:

**Reception** - Daily through RWI Phonics

**Year 1** - Daily 10 minute sessions, as the children progress throughout the year.

**Year 2** - In Autumn term children will continue with weekly sessions for 10 minutes. This will end in spring term with any children falling behind to receive weekly small group intervention.

**Key Stage 2** - Handwriting skills taught through shared writing opportunities. Early intervention for those falling behind with handwriting skills.

Children with handwriting difficulty/transcription skills to be given further intervention - as appropriate e.g. fine motor activities to develop muscle strength and pencil grip.

### **Letterjoin Handwriting scheme**

Gossey Lane uses a cursive handwriting style with the following letter formation.

Lower case letters

Capitals (which must be taller than any lower case letter as per the expectations for KS1 grammar test)

Numbers

The four joins

1. letters without ascenders
2. letters with ascenders
3. horizontal joins
4. horizontal joins to letters with ascenders.

**See Appendix 1**

**NB** Children must be taught individual letters first so that they see them as individual units before learning to join.

School has purchased a specific font that models the handwriting joins from Letter join, where possible this will be used for making resources.

### **Paper and School exercise books**

As motor skills increase then the size of writing should decrease. Children should start writing in plain books then as their handwriting improves into lined exercise books.

#### **Reception**

Plain books with pencil lines drawn on before the children write together with use of lined books (lines to be drawn/ printed approx 2 cm apart)

#### **Year 1**

It is the expectation that children will begin the year using wide lined writing books and end the year on narrower lined books. Teacher judgement must be used in line with the English Subject Leader.

#### **Year 2**

The majority of children should be ready to start the year on narrow lined books. Some will need to continue on wide lined books until ready.

There are instances where children may need to write on plain paper for display purpose, line guides should be used in this instance.

### **Teaching strategies for teaching letter formation**

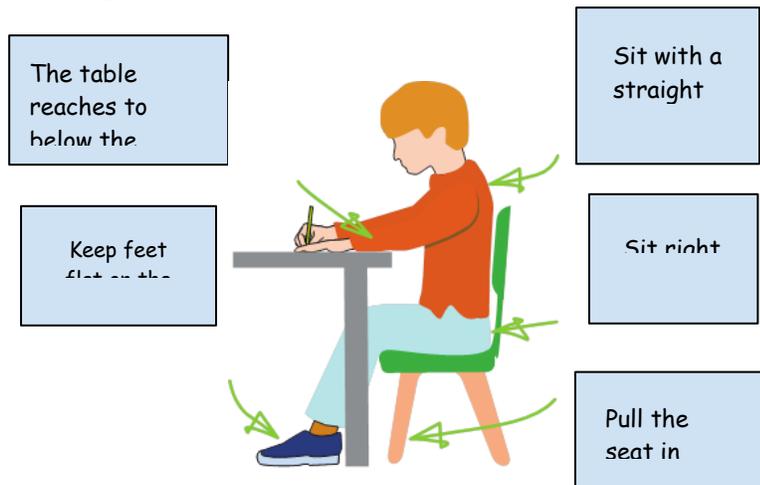
- Model good handwriting all the time including written feedback in books
- Demonstrate
- Talk through the process
- Encourage children to verbalise the process
- Children form letters in the air
- Finger trace over tactile letters
- Write in sand with finger or stick
- Write with chalk on chalkboard
- Finger trace the outline of letters on the back of the person in front of you.

**Getting Ready to Write** - Correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting

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

- Chair and table to be at a comfortable height
- The table should support the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor
- Encourage children to sit up straight and not slouch
- The height of the chairs should be such that the thighs are horizontal and feet flat on the floor.
- Tables should be free of clutter
- Rooms should be well lit
- Left handed pupils should sit on the left of their partners

### **Sitting position**



### **Pencil grip**

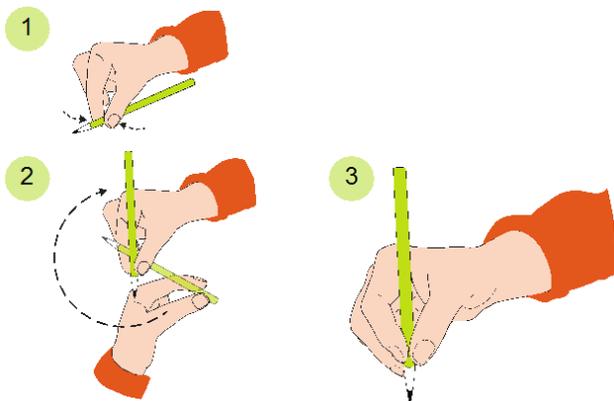
Children should write with a pencil (or a pen when appropriate) with a rounded nib. Pencils should be reasonably sharp. A tripod grip is the most efficient way of holding a pencil, pencil grip will be tracked and assessed through Foundation stage, each year assessment of handwriting grip will be passed on to the receiving teacher to ensure that errors in grip are addressed.

### For right handed children

Hold pencil lightly between thumb and forefinger 3 cm away from the point. The paper should be placed to the right slightly tilted to the left. Use the left hand to steady the paper.

### **The tripod pencil grip**

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.

**For  
left**

### handed children

Hold the pencil lightly between the thumb and forefinger, resting on the first knuckle of the middle finger; hold about 3 cm from the tip. The hand should be kept below the writing line. The paper should be tilted slightly to the right at about 20/30 degrees. Use the right hand to steady the paper.

**NB** It is very important that a right handed child is not seated on the left hand side of a left handed child as their elbows will collide.

Specialist pencils and grips are available to support with the development of tripod grip, see English Lead/SENDSCO.

### Pen licenses

Children can achieve a pen license when their handwriting is consistently at a high standard across all subject areas. The pen licence will be provided by the phase leader in a Phase assembly, once it has been checked by the English Subject leader.

## **Assessment**

Phase leaders will monitor children's presentation in books regularly (Half termly) the following will be considered;

- Is the writing generally legible?
- Are the letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
- Are the joins made correctly?
- Are the spaces between the letters, words and lines appropriate?
- Is the writing properly aligned?
- Are the standards achieved by the majority of pupils in line with the level descriptors in the National Curriculum and Early Years Outcomes?

## **Individual Assessment**

Children should be observed as they write in their lessons across all subject areas.

The following should be taken into account:

- Is the posture correct?
- Does the child hold the pencil correctly?
- Does the child use the correct movement when forming and/or joining letters?
- Are any of the letters reversed or inverted?
- Does the child write fluently and rhythmically?
- Is the writing easily legible?
- Is the pupils handwriting development in line with the level descriptors from the new national curriculum?

## **Appendix 1**

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