

AMOTHERBY COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Handwriting Policy

We believe all children should be given the opportunity to write effectively and confidently. Handwriting should be viewed as an interrelated skill, and developed continuously throughout all areas of the curriculum.

Aims

- To encourage children to produce a clear, fluent handwriting form in order to develop their creative skills in presentation.
- To develop the necessary manual skills as a vehicle for communication.
- To encourage children to take pride in the appearance of their work, as we believe this will have a positive effect on their self-esteem.

Teaching and Learning

Handwriting is a skill which needs to be taught explicitly. Since handwriting is essentially a movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed style by the teacher is very important; it is not sufficient just to require pupils to copy models from a published scheme or worksheet. At all times the teachers handwriting should be correctly formed and clearly legible to be a good role model. This applies to all adults working with children in the classroom. When marking or writing comments, members of staff use cursive handwriting as appropriate. Display writing throughout the school includes cursive writing and computer generated writing, to show different fonts and styles.

Handwriting is taught regularly and systematically, generally outside of the literacy lesson, although shared and guided writing provides many opportunities for the modelling and monitoring of handwriting.

We expect all children to present their work with care and attention to detail, showing pride in their work. In order for this to happen we have agreed consistent approaches throughout the school.

We have adopted the Nelson style of handwriting at Amotherby School. A mixture of whole class, small group and individual teaching is planned. Nelson Handwriting scheme provides a clearly structured programme with full coverage of the technical aspects of writing (including letter formation, basic joins, printing, speedwriting and slope). These are taught in meaningful and curriculum relevant contexts, particularly in the areas of punctuation, spelling and vocabulary.

Continuity and Progression; How handwriting is taught throughout Amotherby School

EYFS

In EYFS children take part in activities to develop gross and fine motor skills and recognition of patterns. Individual letter formation is taught and modelled daily, alongside children practising in free and some directed activities.

Key Stage 1

Building on the Early Years, pupils at key stage 1 develop a legible style. This is achieved in year 1 by developing a comfortable and efficient pencil grip and through daily practice. Correct letter orientation, formation and proportion are taught in line with the Nelson handwriting style, whilst still developing fine and gross motor skills with a range of multi-sensory activities. Children have some more formal lessons sitting at tables, using a pencil and others on the carpet using whiteboards and pens.

This continues into year 2 and the four basic joins are practised three times each week. Joins are modelled on the IWB and children practise these in their handwriting books. The expectation by the end of year 2 is that all children will have started to develop a cursive style.

Key Stage 2 (X3 sessions per week)

In year 3 pupils consolidate their use of the four basic joins ensuring consistency in size, proportion and spacing of letters. Handwriting speed, fluency and legibility are built up through practice. It is at the teacher's discretion whether a child is ready to use a pen. By the end of year 3 we expect children to have developed a fluent joined style. If a child is still finding this difficult half-way through this year, the SENCO should be consulted, to agree a programme of intervention.

By year 4 most children are expected to use a joined handwriting style at all times unless other specific forms are required eg printing on a map. As soon as a child can join their handwriting, they are expected to write with a Berol blue handwriting pen in all books. We still ask children to use pencil in maths books however. In year 5 and 6 handwriting lessons are used to consolidate learning for these pupils who have not yet achieved a fluent legible handwriting script. It is expected that in year 5 children will have 3 short sessions per week but by year 6 only one.

Posture and Position

Children need to be comfortable if they are to become confident and fluent. They should be encouraged to sit without sprawling, with feet flat on the ground and forearms resting comfortably on the table. (**BBC**: bottom to the back of the chair!) The paper needs to be at a slight angle right or left of straight.

SEN

Pupils with specific learning difficulties find handwriting useful because the writing implement stays in the page for the majority of a word. Some children may not be ready to commence cursive handwriting until much later due to insufficient fine motor control. For children finding it difficult to develop a cursive hand, we have two programmes which may be used: Speed up and TESCU. Lines may be highlighted to support children. Resources will be provided to give the necessary support.

Provision for left-handed children

Left-handed children often experience more difficulty with handwriting than right-handed children. The left-hander must be able to see his/her writing as he/she completes it. The non writing hand should be positioned at the top of the page to restrain movement of paper. Left-handed children are encouraged to take some of the responsibility for ensuring they are not seated to the right of a right-handed child when writing. A word processor may be used as an alternative way of presenting work for children who have pronounced handwriting difficulties.

Resources and writing materials

In EYFS children will have access to a variety of suitable writing implements such as large felt tips, pencils and crayons. In key stage 1, children begin to write using pencils. However, by key stage 2 they may be encouraged to use pens, if appropriate, and at the discretion of the teacher. Berol blue handwriting pens (not biro) are standard but, by year six, children may be allowed to use cartridge pens, if appropriate, and at the teacher's discretion.

Special pencil grips and triangular pencils or pens are used by children who have problems with holding their writing implement securely.

Handwriting books, with tramlines, are used throughout key stage 2 for regular practice.

Line guides may be used to improve presentation when writing in topic books or on plain paper.

Presentation

Please see Presentation Policy.

Equal Opportunities

Please see individual policy

Appendices

1. An example of cursive handwriting
2. Pre-writing stage
3. Letter formation

To be reviewed May 2014