

Northway Primary and Nursery School



Policy for Handwriting

Date of Policy: 19th November 2021
Date approved: 25th November 2021
By: The Governing Board of Northway Primary and Nursery School

Signed: Chair of Governors

Subject Lead: Robyn Bell
Date of Review: 1st October 2022

Northway:
Together we can achieve anything
All Learners, All valued,
All achieving...All the time



Introduction:

Northway Primary and Nursery School is a strong and distinctive community, where we value each other as part of the family. We show this through our planning, our teaching, our relationships and respect for each other as individual learners. We are all learners – no matter our age or time within this or another School.

Learning potential is realised most when parents and teachers work in partnership. We believe in our children and we want our children to believe in themselves – they will then 'believe and achieve'. We set ourselves the high standard of: All learners, All achieving, All the time. Our Policy for Teaching and Learning is underpinned by this ethos.

The Northway Curriculum has a golden thread that links a rich tapestry of knowledge, interwoven with key skills and allows children to engage with, connect with and understand their locality and rich cultural offer and take their places as global citizens in the twenty first century.

The Northway Values for Victory exemplifies an ethos that builds community and provides the expectations for excellent attitude and learning behaviour. The curriculum is planned to allow children to explore, evaluate and improve. Children know the high expectations and are encouraged to strive for success in all that they do. Children are nurtured so they can engage with their learning without barriers and reach their own potential. Northway understands that aspiration is good but aspiration for all: all learners, all valued, all achieving...all the time.

Our Curriculum is a progressive programme of study, where children are exposed to knowledge and skills year on year. Children should see the 'big picture' as they progress through school and see building blocks coming into place. They will be immersed in a rich vocabulary and text-base to inspire a love of learning and given the opportunity to share their knowledge. Children can exemplify their prior knowledge and staff teach from this starting point, knowing the expectation for their specific year group. Low state quizzing for pre-assessments endeavour the development of sticky knowledge and post-assessment give children the satisfaction of achievement. Each subject area is taught discretely but has clear cross-curricular links and crossover of skills. We give core subjects and basic skills a strong emphasis but passionately believe in a wide, broad, rich curriculum, where children have deeper learning experiences and develop a life-long love of learning...developing dynamic and industrious citizens for Liverpool and the world who can make a positive contribution.

Excellence, enjoyment, enrichment, progression and relevance are all key principles of our Northway Curriculum from Nursery to Year 6.



RESPECT • TRUST • COURAGE • COMPASSION • FORGIVENESS • PERSEVERANCE • HOPE

1. Statement of consideration of equalities in all policies and procedures

This policy outlines the teaching, organisation and management of our handwriting programme, Letter-join, taught at Northway Primary School. The policy has been drawn up as a result of staff discussion and has the full agreement of the Governing Body. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all teaching staff.

2. Intent

At Northway Primary School we are very proud of our pupil's handwriting and take particular care in our cursive handwriting style. We use Letter-join's on-line handwriting resource as the basis of our handwriting policy as it covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Aims

- To develop a neat, legible, speedy handwriting style using continuous cursive letters, which leads to producing letters and words automatically in independent writing.
- To establish and maintain high expectations for the presentation of written work.
- For pupils to understand, by the end of Year 6, the importance of neat presentation and the need for different letterforms (cursive, printed or capital letters) to help communicate meaning clearly.



Objectives

Handwriting is a basic skill that influences the quality of work throughout the curriculum. By 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.

Our intention is to make handwriting an automatic process that does not interfere with creative and mental thinking.

Expectations

All teaching staff are encouraged to model the cursive style in all their handwriting, whether on whiteboards, displays or in pupils' books. Teachers of children receiving phonics should use the correct phrases that are used in RWI when practising handwriting. It is also important that teachers are sharing the vocabulary of Letter-join when forming letters, e.g. 'start on the line, go all the way to the top, loop and hook'

Consistency throughout the school

Pupils should experience coherence and continuity in the learning and teaching of handwriting across all school years and be encouraged to take pride in the presentation of their work. Our objective is to help pupils enjoy learning and developing their handwriting with a sense of achievement and pride.

3. Implementation

Early Years

For our youngest pupils we teach short handwriting lessons on a daily basis, which will include the following:

- enhancing gross motor skills such as air-writing, pattern-making and physical activities
- exercises to develop fine motor skills such as mark-making on paper, whiteboards, sensory trays, iPads, tablets, etc.
- becoming familiar with letter shapes, their sounds, formation and vocabulary
- correct sitting position and pencil grip for handwriting

Supporting resources using a printed font include:

- all lower case letters and words
- all of the Phonics activities
- all games and activities
- all KS1 worksheets

At the end of this module, children should be able to recognise and form all the printed, lowercase letters of the alphabet.

Module 1 for EYFS teaches pre-cursive patterns and cursive, lower case letters. It starts with Getting Ready for Handwriting including fine and gross motor skills warm-up exercises, correct sitting position and tripod pencil grip.

The first module is divided into three sections covering:

- pre-cursive patterns
- easy letters and words
- harder letters and words

At the end of this module, children should be able to recognise and form all the cursive, lowercase letters of the alphabet and write words using the correct joining techniques.



Key Stage 1: Years 1 and 2

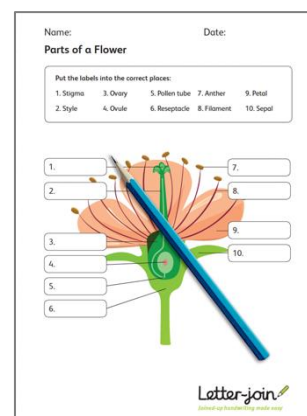
Teaching progresses from five short, to two longer lessons per week:

- continuing with gross and fine motor skills exercises
- strengthening cursive handwriting, learning and practice
- numerals, capitals and printed letters; where and when to use, learning and practice
- KS1 SATs SPaG exercises

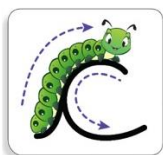
Module 2 for Year 1 contains lessons for teaching how to write capital letters, printed letters, numbers and symbols, whilst reinforcing cursive handwriting using Letter-join's on-line and printed resources. It is divided into three sections covering:

- capital letters
- printed letters
- numbers and symbols

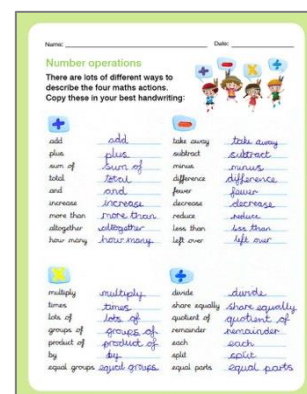
On finishing this module, children should be confident in writing all the capital and printed letters, numbers and symbols and start to become familiar with their use.



Module 3 for Year 2 includes lessons to improve letter formation and orientation of letters through regular practice and to support spelling, grammar and punctuation in readiness for KS1 SATs. The sections in this module cover:



- letter families
- high frequency words
- joining techniques
- sequencing sentences
- dictation exercises
- times table facts
- SPaG practice for KS1 SATs



With the regular handwriting practice throughout this module, children should now be developing the fluency and speed of their writing.

Lower Key Stage 2: Years 3 and 4

Handwriting lessons will continue twice a week in Lower Key Stage 2.

Module 4 for Year 3 is targeted at children in lower KS2 where pupils should be using a cursive style throughout their independent writing in all subjects, helping to refine their handwriting in line with the requirements of each lesson. This module covers topics such as dictation, double letters, number vocabulary, palindromes, tongue twisters, MFL (French and Spanish), onomatopoeia, simile and statutory spellings.

Completion of Module 4 should ensure improvement in the legibility, consistency and quality of the children's handwriting through a variety of resources which link handwriting to other areas of the curriculum.

Module 5 for Year 4 focuses on using handwriting practice to support other subjects in the curriculum and, at the same time, builds on fluency and consistency. This module aims to promote meaningful links with other subjects such as English, maths, science, geography, French and Spanish. Making such links enables children to apply the skills they are learning in context and also provides depth to the curriculum.

Learners will continue to build on producing fluent, consistent and legible handwriting through the regular practice offered in this module's lessons.

On concluding this module, children will have practised applying size-appropriate handwriting to all areas of the curriculum whilst maintaining fluency and legibility.



EXAMPLE

Word of the Week: precarious

Write this week's word six times:

precarious precarious precarious
precarious precarious precarious

Use a dictionary to find the definition of this week's word:

If something is precarious, it is not safe and likely to fall off or fall over.

Write some synonyms of this week's word:

insecure risky hazardous
treacherous unsafe dangerous

Write some antonyms of this week's word:

safe fixed strong
secure protected stable

Write a sentence using this week's word:

The cat was in a precarious position in the tree.
Because the cliff edge is precarious.
Take care on that precarious, old ladder.
The stranded climber was in a precarious situation.

Letter-join

Upper Key Stage 2: Years 5 and 6

More advanced handwriting techniques will be taught during two weekly lessons:

- reinforcing cursive handwriting across the curriculum
- form-filling/labelling using printed and capital letters
- dictation exercises promoting quick note-taking and speedy handwriting writing skills
- KS2 SATs SPaG practice

Module 6 for Year 5 continues to build on combining fluent handwriting with other subjects across the curriculum.

In this module, learners will have plenty of opportunity to develop the stamina and skills to write at length, with accurate spelling and punctuation. With Letter-join's wide range of resources they will be able to work towards producing consistently neat and well-presented handwriting in all curriculum subjects.

On completing this module, children should be producing cursive writing automatically, enabling them to focus on the content of their work rather than the process of writing.

Module 7 Year 6 presents learners with a range of tasks where they have to decide on an appropriate style of handwriting. Promoting speedy, fluent writing continues to be a strong feature. Challenging dictation exercises will refine pupils' revising and checking skills as well as boosting their handwriting speed, stamina and fluency. A range of curriculum-based worksheets will give pupils the opportunity to practise writing at length.

Module 7 also contains a series of worksheets to aid KS2 SATs SPaG revision. They are designed to support year 6 pupils in meeting expected standards for spelling, punctuation and grammar, with lots of SPaG preparation and plenty of handwriting practice.

By the end of this module, children should be able to adapt their handwriting for a range of tasks and purposes and to create different effects. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes, a final handwritten version, an unjoined style or capital letters. All of these writing styles are covered in this module.



Handwriting frequency

Handwriting is a cross-curricular task and will be taken into consideration during all lessons. Formal teaching of handwriting will be carried out regularly and systematically to ensure Key Stage targets are met.

Resources (including iPads)

Pens and pencils

Children will start handwriting using a soft pencil. When fine motor skills have been established a handwriting pen can be used. More competent pupils can use a ballpoint pen. Children can access Letter-join on their iPad for practice at home and in school.

Learners who need more

For children who experience handwriting difficulties due to fine motor development, including those who are left-handed and those with special educational needs, the appropriate additional support will be put into place. Letter-join also includes differentiation activities for extra practice/challenge.

An after-school handwriting club has also been established for those children who need extra guidance. These children will be selected by their class teacher and brought forward to the handwriting co-ordinator.

Homework

Pupils are encouraged to practise their handwriting at home by using the Pupil log-in for Letter-join. Teachers will set specific tasks such as:

- Magic Patterns
- Magic Words
- Phonics Match
- Word Search
- Word Bank
- Write it Right!

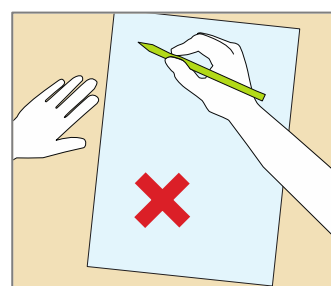
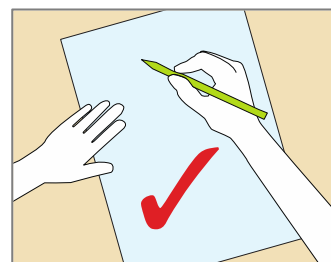
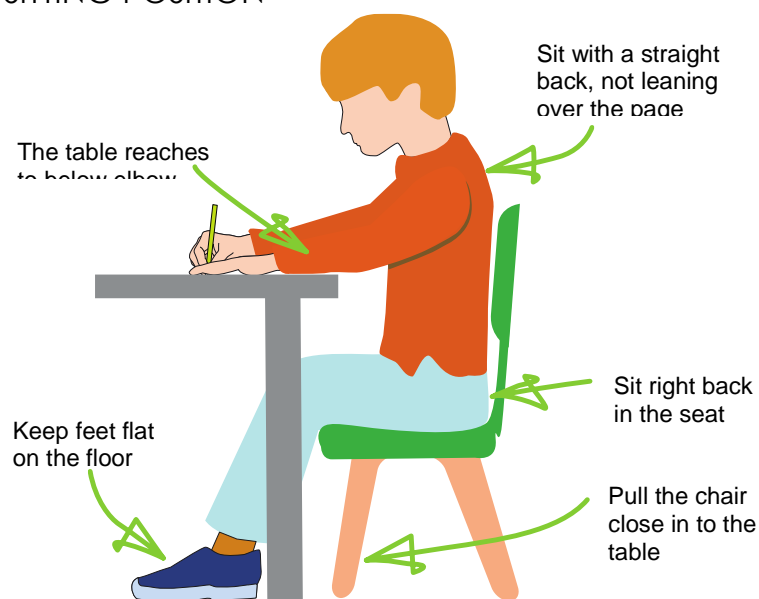
Children can also watch the word and letter animations and practice and explore other handwriting resources on Letter-join.



Correct posture and pencil grip for handwriting

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

SITTING POSITION

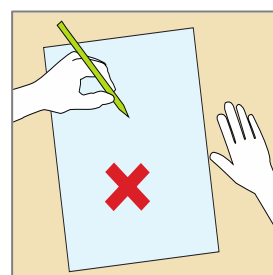
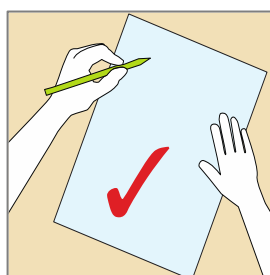
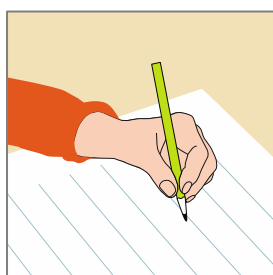
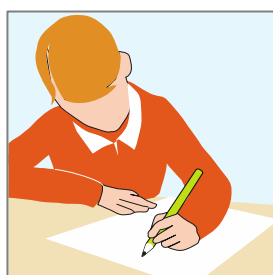


Paper position for right-handed children.

LEFT-HANDED CHILDREN

Left-handed children may find it difficult to follow the movements of right-handed teachers as they model letter formation (and vice versa). Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis.

- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space.
- Pupils should position the paper/book to their left side and slanted, as shown.
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision.
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.



Paper position for left-handed children.

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. We use the Tripod Grip Rhyme:

Right-handed pencil grip



Point away the pencil, Pinch it near the tip, Lift it off the table, Spin it round... and grip.

Left-handed pencil grip



Point away the pencil, Pinch it near the tip, Lift it off the table, Spin it round... and grip.

3. Progression within the subject

Children should be progressing with their handwriting as they move through the year groups. Children who have left their key stage and are not ready to be moved on should be supported by their teacher during handwriting lessons. The child can be given support through watching the videos of the letters/words on Letter-join and/or tracing over a yellow highlighter or marker. Consideration should be given to the equipment they are given; pencil/ pen size and grips are available. Special pens with grip support and other pencil grips can be provided by the SENDCo.

4. Monitoring and Review

It is each class teachers' responsibility to monitor every child during all lessons, teachers should identify those children who need support with their handwriting and make the necessary adjustments. Review of handwriting will happen daily during handwriting lessons and all other subjects.

Handwriting should be assessed via balance in line with National Curriculum expectations during independent write sessions.

5. Role of the pupil / parent and Subject Lead

Parents are encouraged to practice handwriting with their children at home through the use of Letter join. Parents are invited to attend workshops throughout the year focusing on how handwriting is delivered at Northway and ways that they can help at home.

Children are expected to try their best with their presentation and handwriting throughout the curriculum, including looking after the equipment given to support them.

The subject lead will work with the English team to look at further opportunities to develop handwriting across the school. The subject lead will also monitor that the handwriting policy is being implemented consistently throughout the school through book coaching and pupil interviews.