

## The Leys Primary and Nursery School

### Handwriting and Presentation Policy

#### Aims

At The Leys, we believe that neat, well formed handwriting and presentation of written work helps to raise standards as the pupils take pride in and have a sense of ownership of their work. As a school we are adopting the fully cursive method of handwriting.

To enable every pupil to master fast, legible handwriting, we use the Start-Bee Handwriting Scheme in EYFS and Year 1, the order of programmes systematically;

1. Teaches the child how to hold a pencil correctly.
2. Helps them to develop strong writing muscles and the correct posture for writing.
3. Helps them to master making patterns and writing their names.
4. Helps them to form all letters in lowercase and uppercase alphabet.
5. Progresses them from joining up whole words in sentences to writing complete paragraphs.
6. Helps them to write an A4 page of handwritten legible text in under ten minutes.

#### How we track and reward handwriting progress.

The school follows the outline as set out by the Standards & Testing Agency's Expectations for Handwriting for KS1 and KS2 (Appendix 1).

#### Year 1

- o Lower-case letters are written in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.
- o Pupils can write capital letters.
- o Pupils can write digits 0-9.

## Year 2

- o Pupils can write lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another
- o Pupils are starting to join up their letters
- o Pupils are able to write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters
- o Pupils are using spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters

## Year 3 and 4

- o Pupils are joining up their letters.
- o Pupil's handwriting is becoming increasingly neater, legible and the quality is more consistent.

## Year 5 and 6

- o Pupils can produce a neat, joined up legible script.
- o Pupils can speed up their handwriting by:
  - o choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters
  - o choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task

**How a pencil should be held correctly:**



Pupils are recognised and rewarded for completing each criteria.

(Appendix 2; Handwriting and Presentations Certificates)

(Appendix 3; for further Handwriting analysis.)

## **EYFS**

### **Approaches**

In the EYFS all children have daily opportunities to develop their fine motor skills. These tasks are carefully planned for according to the individual needs of the children and are supported by the EYFS practitioners. Activities such as:

- Play dough - pinching, squeezing with thumb and forefinger. Who can make the longest snake?
- Threading - beads, pasta, straws. Let's all make a necklace.
- Picking up small objects - use tweezers and pipettes/eye droppers. How many peas can you put in this pot?

Throughout the day, children are also provided with many opportunities during adult led and child initiated activities to develop their fine motor skills. Activities such as:

- Finger rhymes - stretching, curling fingers.
- Water play - using spray toys and spray bottles. Let's go outside and water the flowers.
- Craft activities - glue sticks and paint brushes. Make a collage with lots of fine papers and decorate it with sequins.
- Icing cakes - using a plastic dispenser to push and squeeze out the icing.
- Strengthening activities - swinging from the climbing frame or grasping to climb and crawl.

In Reception pupils use the Start Bee Handwriting scheme; it has been designed specifically for beginners in EYFS and KS1. The use of creative stations and light boxes takes the complete novice writer from marking marks through to writing letter.

### **Expectations**

Children will begin the Foundation Stage with a wide variety of writing skills ranging from simply making marks to writing their own name unaided. They will move from gross to finer motor skills using a variety of tactile methods. They need opportunities to make marks in their own way and to gradually refine these into recognisable patterns and eventually individual letters. Children will be taught correct letter formation through the daily phonics lesson and follow up adult directed tasks. The majority of pupils by the end of the Foundation stage will be able to form all letters correctly, with the correct starting position and

orientation.

### **The Role of Parents and Carers**

The Foundation Stage teachers play an important role in communicating the process of handwriting at an early stage, for example, to ensure that parents are informed and encouraged to offer good models to their pupils by using only capital letters for the beginning of their names, practising drawing patterns together, and playing joining up games which encourage left to right directionality. The Foundation Stage teachers, in partnership with the English subject leader, are expected to communicate with pre-school agencies to encourage good practice.

### **SEN**

Teachers should be aware that children with Dyspraxia, Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Cerebral Palsy, Down Syndrome and any other motor functioning impairment may have ongoing difficulty with handwriting due to the nature of their special need and therefore may need to be supported with alternative means of recording. Pencil grips and writing slopes are also available for children who need it.

Activities to develop and exercise 'gross motor skills' can be promoted as these will assist fine motor skills, as will plenty of pre-writing activities to loosen up the wrist and upper arm.

### **The Learning Environment**

A dedicated writing area is established in all classrooms at Foundation Stage. Writing areas/boxes are equipped with a range of writing implements and materials. In KS1 and 2 suitable materials are available for pupils to work at their own tables. Throughout all Key stages teachers display both handwritten and word processed work to give a high profile to developing a neat, legible cursive style.

All pupils from Nursery to Year 3 are equipped with BiC thicker triangular pencils and coloured pencils, to master the correct pencil grip. Pupils from Year 4 to Year 6 are also supplied with BiC mechanical pencils with an easy grip guide. Fountain pens are awarded to pupils once they have received a pencil licence. (See Appendix 2 for Steps to success for Handwriting)

## **Inclusion**

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and a specific individual or group programme is drawn up in The Match fit Handwriting Assessment, which takes place annually in Year 1. Every pupil is assessed using Start-Bee's Handwriting Match Fit Assessment to understand an individual pupil's current handwriting ability and needs. By establishing the starting point and outline for each and every pupil, teachers are better placed to create a handwriting strategy for their pupils.

## **EYFS and Key Stage 1**

The full Start-Bee Handwriting Programme consists of 30 minutes session which usually takes place 2/3 times a week. In that time complete novices are taken from the basics of making marks through to creating joined up writing. As the majority of writing problems stem from an inability to hold the pencil correctly which is why a large proportion of the weekly session is spent teaching children how to hold a pencil as well as giving them exercises to strengthen their motor skills, muscles and grip.

## **Key Stage 2**

Pupils in KS2 listen to the *Pencil Grip Song* and exercise to the *Jungle Workout* to develop and strengthen their motor skills, muscles and pencil grip.

## **Left-handed pupils**

All teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision:

- o paper should be positioned to the left for right handed pupils and to the right for left-handed pupils and slanted to suit the individual in either case;
- o pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision;
- o pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side;
- o left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child, so that they are not competing for space;
- o extra practice with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.

Teachers are alert to the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when they are modelled by a right-handed teacher. Teachers should demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

### **Assessment and recording**

Teachers assess handwriting on a regular basis using the Hertfordshire assessment criteria to determine future targets for improvement. Throughout the year the SLT and English Co-ordinator will monitor handwriting as well as having discussions with the children about their work during class visits and will provide positive and constructive feedback accordingly.

### **Presentation guidance**

**It is essential that all children should have pride in their work and that it is set out well.**

**From Year 3 pupils must be encouraged to use a neat, cursive style in all written work, except in Maths.**

- o All work must begin with the short date in the following format:  
10.9.16.
- o The date should be written on the top line with an appropriate title. This should be underlined in Key stage 2.
- o Key Stage 1 underlined- as appropriate for ability.
- o Underlining should be completed with a ruler.
- o Children should write from the margin to the edge of the page.
- o Work should be ruled off at the start of the following lesson, leaving the teacher room to comment on the work. Teacher's comments will indicate whether a correction needs to be addressed.
- o At Keystage 1 children will generally begin new work on a new page as appropriate for ability.
  
- o At Key stage 2 children will rule off after the last piece of work ready to begin new work. Work should be ruled off at the start of the following lesson, leaving the teacher room to comment on the work.
- o Teacher's comments will indicate whether a correction needs to be addressed.
- o Children will be encouraged to draw a neat line through any mistakes.
- o Rubbers will be used within reason to correct pencil work.

- o Criteria for presentation of work will be discussed prior to commencement of work.
- o Pictures should be coloured in pencil crayons or plastic crayons. Felt pens should not be used in exercise books.
- o When squared paper is used for Maths 1 digit is written in each box and a line is left between each sum.
- o In Maths an eraser can be used at the teacher's discretion.

## Appendix 1

The Start-Bee Handwriting Scheme for Primary follows the outline as set out by the Standards & Testing Agency's Expectations for Handwriting for KS1 and KS2.

The Standards & Testing Agency's Handwriting Assessment Framework 2016.

### The Assessment Framework at the End of Key Stage 1 - Writing -

Working towards the expected standard:

- forming lower-case letters in correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place
- forming lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another in some of the writing

At the expected standard:

- using the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters in some of their writing
- writing capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters

Working at greater depth:

- using the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters in most of their writing

### The Assessment Framework at the End of Key Stage 2 - Writing - Requires:

Working towards the expected standard:

- producing legible, joined handwriting

Working at Greater Depth:

- maintaining legibility, fluency and speed in handwriting through choosing whether or not to join specific letters



**Handwriting Certificates - Steps to Success**

**EYFS to Year 2 - Emerging Stage**

- I can sit on my chair correctly
- I can write on the line.
- I can write with correct spaces between my words.
- I can write my letter and numbers in the correct size.
- I can write lower-case letters with the correct direction.
- I can write lower-case letters with starting and finishing points in the right place.
- I can write capital letters.
- I can write digits 0-9.
- I am starting to join up my letters.

**Key Stage 2- Developing Stage**

- I can join up my letters.
- I can join my letters with starting and finishing points in the right place.
- I can join up my letters in a neat and legible way.

**Pen Licence - Secure Stage**

- I can produce neat and legible joined up writing.
- I can join and write speedily.

**As a rule of thumb:**

**If by the age of five, a child is:**

- o struggling to write their own name
- o having difficulty shaping their letters correctly
- o not holding the pencil correctly
- o flipping from hand to hand with their pencil (unable to decide which hand to use when writing/colouring in/making simple marks)
- o struggling to make clear, strong continuous lines/patterns

**If by the age of seven:**

- o their hands ache when they write a few lines
- o they are unable to join up their letters
- o can't write more than a paragraph after five minutes
- o they do not know the correct way to create the letters (entry and exit strokes) eg. The letter "a" looks like an "o" with a line shooting out of it and other strange letter formations that don't "look right"
- o they confuse letters, for example, a "d" is written the "wrong way round" and becomes a "b"
- o the sizings of their letters are not clear (some letters are much larger than other letters even though they should all be of a similar size)
- o some letters are written above the line when they should go over the line eg. Common letters that are written above the line like "y", "g", "j" and "q" and they seem to "rise" above all the other letters
- o their letters and words are not clear and it is difficult to read their handwriting
- o they do not enjoy handwriting at all and have created their own coping/deflection strategies to do anything else but their written work

