

# **Westvale Primary School Handwriting Policy September 2021**



*Students who can write quickly achieve up to a grade higher at GCSE regardless of academic ability. Slow hand writers also tend to be poor spellers.*

Teacher Training Agency, 2004

*For children with learning difficulties, good handwriting is crucial because it is linked with reading and spelling*

Ramsden, 1992

*Good handwriting is not just a presentation perk which is applied to the surface of school work; it is inextricably interwoven with the total learning and sense-making process that should constitute a child's schooling.*

Smith, 1977

*Joining the letters is desirable for all but essential for the dyslexic pupil. He is likely to confuse any printed shape, so in teaching him to make separate printed shapes his problems are increased.*

Kathleen Hickey, 2007

## **INTENT**

We aim to ensure that all children will be able to write clearly, fluently and quickly so that they can cope with the everyday demands of life and school both now and in the future.

## **The Process**

Children are taught the conventional ways of forming letter shapes, both lower case and capitals, through purposeful guided practice in order to foster a comfortable and legible handwriting style. Teachers may use a whiteboard or exercises on the Interactive Whiteboard as well as gross muscular movements to embed physical patterning of handwriting.

Correct posture should be encouraged at all times e.g. elbow away from the body, forearm supported by the table. Correct pencil grip should begin in the Early Years as faults are hard to undo later.

From Foundation stage children are introduced to the Read, Write, Inc phonics scheme sayings and methods of forming letters.

Teachers use the read, write inc dialogue linked to letter formation from the outset to encourage consistency across the school. At all times, teachers demonstrate movements in the air, on the board and with IT. Then children practice with the teacher observing. In the

Early Years, there are many ways of promoting fine motor skills from painting to drawing with a finger in shaving foam!

The dialogue for letter formation is repeated whatever the activity, becoming a mantra. Through drilling and analysing weaknesses e.g. are letters being formed in the right direction, is the pencil held properly?

Writing will become automatic and poorer writers will be supported by the multi-sensory act of linking phoneme to grapheme.

As children begin to write letters, they are provided with large paper and a single line. Lined paper is important because so much about handwriting is to do with the letters' orientation to the line. Paper with lines is introduced in our Reception class. The width of line decreases as the child moves up the school and the number of lines per page increases. Teachers always consider the needs of the child first in deciding on the book/paper to be used.

### **Agreed Style of Writing**

We aim that most children are joining letters by the end of KS1.

In Key stage two, pupils will join using a lead in and out stroke.

Children begin their writing journey by writing in pencil. When the class teacher feels that a child is confidently writing cursively to a good standard they will be given a 'Pen License' and will be moved on to writing in pen.

Handwriting is practised daily alongside spellings in KS1 and in KS2. Practises and the choice of material will be appropriate for the age group and individual child.

Consider the use of gripping aids and slanted supports for some children with special educational needs where fine motor and muscular control are delayed.

### **Teacher's Handwriting and Displays**

The teacher's and TA's handwriting is the model for the children. All teachers should aim to produce quality writing at all times. It is pointless to provide the children with handwriting lessons if the board model does not match the prescribed style. Where writing is displayed around school it is important that the correct font is used to support the modelling of correct letter formation. 'Letter join air plus' and 'letter join plus font' is the preferred style for cursive.

### **S.E.N.**

Teachers will need to be sensitive to the needs of children with Special Educational Needs and to genuine developmental needs. Left-handed children need particular sensitivity.

