

Haddington Primary School



Handwriting Policy and Programme



Handwriting Policy

Rationale

Establishing a legible style of handwriting will contribute to achieving positive and successful aspects of literacy for all of our children. The content of children's writing is valued and is the focus of feedback in writing lessons. The purpose of teaching handwriting regularly is to ensure children gain the skills needed to communicate their thoughts and ideas in a variety of writing styles in a legible and neat manner. Correct formation ensures that children can write at an appropriate and efficient pace. We believe handwriting is a key skill that promotes the communication of thoughts and ideas across all curricular areas. Good presentation of handwriting results in children taking pride and satisfaction in the quality of their own work.

Aims

We aim to

- Encourage children to be aware of the importance of clarity, neatness and the correct formation of letters and numbers.
- Encourage children to have fluent, legible and speedy handwriting.
- Encourage children to have a comfortable and efficient pencil hold and working position.
- Promote children's awareness of presentation skills and thereby build self-esteem.
- Provide a clear programme that allows the opportunity for regular handwriting practice and promotes handwriting skills across the curriculum.
- Establish clear continuity and progression in handwriting throughout the school.
- Establish high expectations of pupils' handwriting in order to raise standards.
- Promote the importance of immediate feedback to the children verbally and through reward stickers and certificates.

Teaching and Learning

Handwriting should be taught as a specific skill rather than as an independent task. To achieve success children should practise handwriting regularly for short amounts of time and this should be supplemented by independent activities.

Children are entitled to

- direct teaching and accurate modelling,
- relevant resources and an environment which promotes good handwriting,
- a dedicated handwriting jotter and
- receive feedback on how to improve.

Before a handwriting lesson children should take part in a physical warm-up. These will enable children to

- Extend wrist position.
- Develop core strength and posture.
- Increase shoulder and elbow stability.
- Develop bi-lateral co-ordination and cross the midline.
- Develop spatial awareness and hand/eye co-ordination.
- Increase concentration and focus.
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Children should be encouraged to apply their learning across the curriculum.

Application of skills learned in handwriting lessons should be evident in writing in all areas in the curriculum. Examples of good handwriting should be celebrated and displayed to motivate children.

Basic elements of a handwriting lesson:

- Sessions should be fun, varied and multi-sensory (age and stage appropriate) e.g. with fingers, write letters in the air, on backs or on hands, orally describe letter shapes and joins with children. These activities will enable the children to develop their fine and gross motor skills.
- Check the children's posture and position of jotter. Make sure children are sitting properly with all chair legs and feet on the floor.
- Teacher models and describes.
- Children work in handwriting jotters with pencil.
- Children practise independently with teacher model.
- Teacher, peer or self-assessment.

Continuity and Progression

The Handwriting Programme of Work will be used by all teachers to ensure continuity and progression in learning. There is a clear description of expectations. Planning for handwriting should be included in the literacy forward plan. Differentiation should be applied at all levels.

The Learning Environment

Children should see a variety of print around the classroom and school. Handwritten signs are as valid as computer generated signs. It is important that the teacher models agreed formations in their public writing. In all classes a range of writing materials will be available for pupils to work with independently.

Children should experience working on vertical or upright surface depending on their developmental stage in order to develop and strengthen their muscle tone.

Children that are left handed or struggle with fine motor control will receive additional support through paper position guides, additional control practise etc.

Writing Area

Each class should have an age and stage appropriate writing area which will provide a stimulating and interesting area where pupils can choose to write. Children should be provided with a variety of free writing opportunities and writing tasks. There should be a variety of pens/pencils, paper, real examples of writing e.g. menus, instructions, etc and common words should be displayed.

Assessment and Feedback

Teachers will assess on a regular basis focussing on specific learning intentions and outcomes relating to age and stage of pupils. This will inform next steps. It is important for children to know what they are doing successfully and what they need to improve on therefore verbal and written feedback should be used continuously. Children should be given the opportunity to self and peer-assess.

Handwriting Programme

Early Level

Nursery - Focus on hand and eye coordination, gross and fine movement and strength. The emphasis at this stage is on movement, strength and gross and fine motor control. Children will access a range of learning opportunities to develop pre-writing skills, see appendix 1 and 2 building blocks for handwriting. Formal handwriting is not taught in nursery however children will be provided with experiences to develop pre-writing skills as well as gross motor and co-ordination skills. Children will be provided with a range of different mark making activities and materials including free flowing movements and patterns on large paper, paint brushes and water, sticks in sand, large chalk or squeeze bottles outside. There should be thick pencils in the writing areas to allow children to practise the correct grip, see appendix 3. A selection of hand strengthening activities will also enable the children to build up the muscles in the hand that are needed for correct pencil grip.

Primary 1 - Focus spatial awareness and the correct formation of letters. Children should continue to have opportunities to engage in activities focusing on hand control to strengthen grip e.g. plasticine/playdough/clay, cutting out, small construction, jigsaws, peg boards, threading, drawing patterns, Smart Pals, and whiteboards. To support the development of pre-handwriting skills, see pre-handwriting development flowcharts focussing on scissor skills, fine motor skills and pre-writing skills, appendix 4. The children will use thick pencils. For children who are still having difficulties with grip and control, different grips and pencils will be available to support. Children should be provided with a variety of materials when introducing and practising letters. The children will begin formal handwriting in blank jotters incorporating the formation of letters using Read Write Inc rhymes. At this stage handwriting should be considered as a separate subject with the teacher demonstrating correct letter formation and therefore should not be taught alongside phonics. There will be a focus on the formation of numbers. Lessons should be teacher led, ensuring correct formations are demonstrated. Once the children are forming letters correctly they will move on to lined jotters to teach correct sizing and placement of letters. The formation of letters should be taught at an appropriate pace aiming for all the lowercase letters and numbers to be introduced as quickly as possible to promote good habits. Children should be encouraged to write their name correctly.

First Level

Primary 2 - Focus of size and positioning, ascending and descending letters through small words. Hand control activities as described in Primary 1 should be provided. Children will practise handwriting in their lined jotters and will recap letter families, upper case letters and the formation of numbers. The formation of lower case letters should be practised as part of words e.g. common words, CVC, CCVC and CVCC words. In the last term, in preparation for joined script, flowing line patterns should be introduced as a priority - See appendix 5. The letters will not be joined but the children will write letters that regularly are written together and understand size and position. Handwriting lessons should be teacher led and taught as a whole class where appropriate. There will be opportunities for children to independently practise in areas in the class. The children will work in lined jotters.

Primary 3 - The focus will be on joining letters correctly. Children will now move on to joins starting with baseline joins moving on to top joins, anti-clockwise joins and other joins. In the early stages the correct movements are more important than the appearance of the writing. There will be continued emphasis on size and position of letters. It is expected that children will begin to apply their learning in joining to their writing across the curriculum; this will build up as they learn more joins. The children will work in lined jotters. As above, handwriting will be taught as a whole class. Additional activities in letter formation and hand control should be provided for children experiencing difficulties.

Primary 4 - The focus will be to apply joins in words and sentences. Children will continue to practise all letter joins in lined jotters. There will be a continued emphasis on size and position of letters. Handwriting could focus on spelling such as pattern/common words, and words in relation to IDL. In the last term the children should be encouraged to apply all their skills and join all letters correctly. As in previous years, handwriting should be teacher led - this will help to reinforce good practice and will give opportunities for self-assessment. By this stage, expectations should be for pupils to transfer joined script to all areas of the curriculum. Pupils will need to be reminded regularly and praised.

Second Level

Primary 5 - The focus will be to apply joins in words and sentences across the curriculum

Children will continue to practise all letter joins in lined jotters. There will be a continued emphasis on size and position of letters. The children should apply their learning in joining letters correctly in their writing across the curriculum. Handwriting could focus on spelling such as pattern/common words, and words in relation to IDL. Previous teaching should be consolidated. The children should independently apply all their skills and join all letters correctly. As with Primary 4, handwriting lessons should

be teacher led to support in reinforcing good practice and give opportunity for self-assessment.

Primary 6 and 7 - The focus will be on developing speed, rhythm and accuracy of writing.

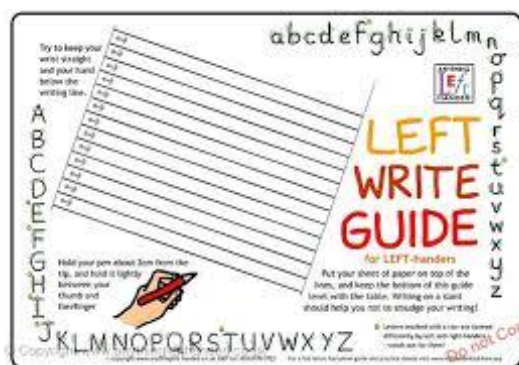
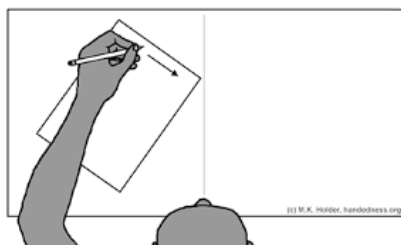
Pupils will confidently join their writing correctly with increasing accuracy and speed across all writing. Research has shown that by P6 it is very difficult for pupils to change their handwriting habits. At this stage rather than class lessons it is worth encouraging pupils to use their own fluent and legible handwriting style in all of their writing. Handwriting should be assessed regularly in order to identify any difficulties and correct them. Opportunities to write using various pens and pencils should be provided. Share with pupils what is expected in terms of handwriting and presentation before all tasks e.g. it would be unrealistic to expect perfect handwriting when note taking when pupils are expected to write quickly.

Entitlement

Stage	
Nursery	The children are provided with daily opportunities in areas around the Nursery
P1	August - February four times a week March - June three times a week
P2	August to April 3three times a week April - June two times a week
P3 and 4	Two times a week
P5,6 and 7	Once per week

Left handed writers

- Photocopiable Left Handed Book available
- Taped guide on the table to ensure correct position of jotter or paper.
- Encourage child to place jotter or paper bottom corner to belly button.



Link to East Lothian Literacy Curriculum Framework

Handwriting

<p>On Track in Nursery</p>	<p><i>As I play and learn, I enjoy exploring interesting materials for writing...LIT 0-21b</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can hold and use a pencil effectively and with a preferred hand. • I can draw and describe shapes and pictures. • I can understand that we can record ideas using written symbols and pictures - graphemes. • I can experiment with making letter shapes using a wide variety of materials. • I can create some letters shapes independently • I can recall patterns and sequences of shapes, symbols and letters and recreate them. • I can write my name. • I can draw a face with detail.
<p>On Track in P1</p>	<p><i>As I play and learn, I enjoy exploring interesting materials for writing...LIT 0-21b</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can hold a pencil effectively with an appropriate grip. • I can recognise, copy and continue patterns with left to right tracking. • I can form almost all lower case letters and some upper case letters correctly. • I can form letters to write words.
<p>On Track in P2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I can present my writing in a way that will make it legible and attractive for my reader...LIT 1.24a</i> • I can form most letters independently and correctly, so others can read my writing. • I can write my letters starting at the correct place. • I can form all lower case letters and almost all upper case letters correctly. • I can write most letters the correct size. • I can leave a finger space between words. • I can use illustrations to help explain the text.
<p>On Track in P3</p>	<p><i>I can present my writing in a way that will make it legible and attractive for my reader...LIT 1.24a</i></p> <p>I can consistently form all letters correctly, so others can read my writing.</p> <p>I can show which letters sit on the line, and which letters have tails that go under the line.</p> <p>I can space my words so others can read my writing.</p> <p>I can include images and other features to make my writing attractive for my reader.</p> <p>I can form letters correctly.</p> <p>I can ensure my letters are the correct size.</p>
<p>On Track in P4</p>	<p><i>I can present my writing in a way that will make it legible and attractive for my reader...LIT 1.24a</i></p> <p>I can use upper and lower case letters correctly.</p> <p>I can write accurately so that others can read my work.</p> <p>I can space all words correctly so others can read my writing</p> <p>I can organise the layout of text so that it is easy to read.</p> <p>I can select images and other features to make my writing attractive for my audience.</p>
<p>On Track in P5</p>	<p>I can use layout and presentation accurately to engage the reader</p> <p>I can select images and other features to make my writing attractive for the reader.</p>
<p>On Track in P6</p>	<p>I can use layout and presentation accurately to engage the reader.</p> <p>I can select images and other features to make my writing attractive for the reader.</p> <p>I can write with increasing speed whilst remaining accurate.</p> <p>I can set out completed work appropriately whilst learning about conventions appropriate to a variety of genres</p>
<p>On Track in P7</p>	<p>I can use layout and presentation to engage the reader and follow established conventions appropriate to the genre.</p> <p>I can write quickly, consistently and accurately.</p> <p>I can give attention to imaginative presentation and layout.</p>

