

Priory Infant School

Handwriting Policy

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of handwriting at Priory Infant School.

Aims

We aim for our children to:

- achieve a neat, legible and comfortable style of handwriting with correctly formed letters and appropriate cursive joins as (and if) appropriate.
- develop flow and speed as writers.
- produce correctly formed letters automatically in their independent writing.

In order to achieve these aims, the following principles are followed:

Teaching and Learning

- Handwriting is taught regularly in classes, groups and individually.
- Initially, patterns are used to practise early writing skills. Our Yr R children write with a variety of tools and multisensory methods to help free-flowing hand motions e.g. WriteDance. Pattern work is encouraged both indoors and out.
- Correct pencil hold and letter formation are taught from the beginning and handwriting skills are often taught through phonics and spelling sessions.
- When marking or writing comments, members of staff use cursive handwriting if appropriate.
- Display writing throughout the school includes a mixture of cursive writing, print and computer-generated writing.

Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility. If they have difficulty, this will limit fluency and inhibit the quality and quantity of their work. At Priory, children are taught to form individual letters appropriately and accurately first and are only taught to join their handwriting if teachers feel that they are developmentally ready. As a school, we feel that a cursive script for some children might impede their creative flow.

Handwriting skills are taught regularly, usually through phonics and spelling sessions. Teachers use the Nelson Handwriting Scheme as a rough guide and framework for planning. Our approach is very much a 'common sense' one based on **only** joining letters if the join is a comfortable one and keeping things simple to be able to focus more on **fluidity, legibility and speed**.

Timing for teaching handwriting

Handwriting is to be a regular part of the school curriculum. Timetabling these sessions is the responsibility of class teachers. Sessions are monitored on a regular basis by the school literacy leader.

Provision for left handed children

At least 10% of the population are left-handed, the majority of whom are boys. Left-handed children are encouraged to sit to the left of right-handed children, so their elbows do not bump. They are encouraged to find a comfortable orientation for their paper, usually slightly to the left of centre of their body, and to have their fingers about 1.5cm from the point of their pencil. Left-handed handwriting guides are available to use in each class.

Resources and Writing Materials

Children are given experience of a variety of writing tools. Handwriting pens are sometimes used if writing is being displayed but biros are not used in books.

Nelson Teacher books are sometimes used as a base to plan and prepare resources.

If plain or lined paper is used, a sheet of sugar paper is made available to ease flow.

Special Educational Needs

Pupils with specific learning difficulties can find cursive handwriting useful because the writing implement stays on the page for the majority of a word. However, for many children, a cursive style can be very confusing. If a child fails to progress with a cursive style of writing we will encourage the child to develop a neat and comfortable printed script. If children have core weakness, the school operates several intervention strategies including Clever Hands, Dough Disco and Fizzy. The school will ask for advice and support from external agencies if the appropriate progress is not made. Writing slopes, pencil grips etc are made available for children who need additional support with their pencil grip and fine motor skills.

How handwriting is taught throughout the school

Year R

The emphasis at the early stages, particularly in Terms 1 and 2, is with movement rather than neatness. Letter formation (starting at the right entry point and then moving in the right direction) learned at this early stage becomes automatic and has a profound influence on later fluency and legibility. To aid movement, close attention is given to pencil grip, correct posture, the positioning of the paper and the organisation of the writing space. Teachers are vigilant to ensure that bad habits do not become ingrained and that the specific needs of left-handed pupils (for example, additional tracking and tracing of letters at the pre-writing stage) and those with special educational needs are met.

In the pre-communicative stage, pupils play with writing and these experiments are recognised and praised as an important stage in the child's understanding that marks on paper convey meaning. Pupils are given the opportunity to experiment with a range of writing materials and implements both indoors and out; a multi-sensory approach is used to help pupils feel the movement in the hand. Fine motor skills are developed through bead threading, colouring, puzzles etc. Pencil control is developed through tracing, dot to dot, pattern copying etc. Letter formation is practised and the link to the phonic sound is made.

Years 1 and 2

In accordance with the 2014 National Curriculum, the children are taught how to form both lower case and capital letters whilst still developing fine and gross motor skills with a range of multi-sensory activities.

Handwriting is taught regularly and can be linked to phonics sessions. The children are taught to:

- Write from left to right and from top to bottom.
- Start and finish letters correctly.
- Be consistent with the size and shape of letters and the spacing of letters and words.
- Have the correct pencil grip.
- Find a convenient position for their page.
- Have the correct posture and position.

Assessment

At least three times a year, samples of children's writing are collected and moderated against National Curriculum criteria – this will include an assessment of handwriting.

This Policy written by:

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Policy to be reviewed: 2018

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|-------------------|
| Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee |
| Ff/f Gg Hh Ii Jj |
| Kk/k Ll Mm Nn Oo |
| Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu |
| Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz |