

Handwriting Policy

The Importance of Handwriting

Handwriting plays an incredibly important role in everyday life, beginning in early childhood and running through to adulthood. In order for children to develop neat and presentable handwriting they must initially be taught how to form their letters correctly. Once a child has the skill to form letters correctly then they will be able to join them to create smooth flowing handwriting.

Developing beautiful handwriting not only improves the presentation of written work, it also helps to improve a child's self-esteem.

How is handwriting taught at Chantlers Primary School?

Early Years

By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional wellbeing. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination which is later linked to early Literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.

Pre-School

In Pre-School the children have daily opportunities to access areas of provision that will develop both Gross Motor and Fine Motor skills.

Reception

The early teaching of handwriting follows the 'Little Wandle' Phonics Scheme. Children will be taught how to

- Sit correctly with feet flat on the floor.
- Grip their pencil correctly.
- Taught how their letters during Phonics with a rhyme.
- Be given regular opportunities to practise writing.

Autumn Term

On entry, all children are assessed and observations of pencil grip, control and pressure are recorded. Through our daily phonic session children are taught the correct formation of lower case and upper case letters. This direct teaching is supported by a variety of opportunities to develop gross motor and fine motor within the provision. By the end of the Autumn Term Phase 2 phonemes and graphemes have been taught and the children begin to apply their phonic knowledge when writing. A Parent Workshop is delivered to give an overview of Phonics/Handwriting.

Spring Term

As the year progresses the focussed teaching content increases and the children are writing more regularly. Phase 3 Phonics is taught in the same way as Phase 2 and children are given opportunities to apply their increasing knowledge. A weekly independent writing session is introduced. Through regular assessment and when children have developed their fine motor skills and are correctly forming their letters, they are encouraged to write with 'lead ins' and 'lead outs'. It can take some children longer than others and this is supported. Any children found to be working behind age related expectations will be included in intervention work to help them catch up.

Summer Term

In the final term, most children are competent in writing recognisable letters with a 'lead in' and a 'lead out'. Children confident and able are encouraged to begin to join letters as they write. Some will confidently join and the others are regularly encouraged to have a go. It's useful to note here that during this transition stage the writing can appear untidy. This usually improves quite quickly.

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1 the children will use handwriting practice books. Handwriting is taught as a key skill, but close attention is paid to handwriting in all other areas of the curriculum.

Year 1

In Year 1 the children will continue to develop their pre-cursive handwriting with increasing fluency and speed by:

- Having a correct pencil grip, posture and paper position.
- Knowing the correct way each letter and numeral is formed (lower case letters and capital letters).
- Forming all letters correctly (including size and orientation).

Year 2

In Year 2 the children progress to write legibly in a cursive style with increasing fluency and speed by:

- Joining their letters.
- Knowing which letters are the break letters.
- Practising skills of printing, slanting and speedwriting.
- Progressing to an individual joined style.
- Considering handwriting styles for different purposes.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2, handwriting is taught as part of the key skills lesson each morning. It is also addressed whenever the children are writing. Children are provided with intervention if required. At the start of each year group children are given the opportunity to earn their pen licences. Handwriting is constantly monitored throughout the key stage. We adapt the policy to meet the needs of individual children where necessary.