

Honilands Handwriting Policy



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Statement of intent

At Honilands we believe that handwriting, similar to reading and spelling, can affect pupils' progress and achievement across the entire curriculum. When taught effectively, handwriting is mastered by the majority of pupils during the primary phase, allowing them to develop a more effective style of handwriting by the time they begin secondary school.

One of the most successful methods for ensuring consistent teaching and learning across the school is by having a clear policy in place. This policy has been developed in consultation with all the teaching staff in order to ensure clear and consistent methods for teaching handwriting across the school.

Our aim is to help children develop a free flowing style which is well formed and legible, so that they can write with confidence and speed. The decision to use a continuous cursive style is to support the speed and confidence of writers from the earliest stage.

1. National curriculum standards

1.1. In September 2014, the DfE published the 'English programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2' document which included a set of handwriting standards that pupils are expected to reach by the end of each year group.

1.2. All members of school staff have regard to the national curriculum standards for handwriting when delivering lessons.

1.3. During Reception, pupils are taught:

- Individual letter formation, which is modelled and practised in working towards the objectives listed below at Key Stage 1.
- To develop gross and fine motor skills, as well as to recognise patterns.
- Copies of the school's alphabet are displayed in every classroom and are available for parents.

1.4. During Year 1, pupils are taught to:

- Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly.
- Begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place.
- Form capital letters.
- Form digits 0-9.
- Understand which letters belong to which handwriting families (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.

1.5. During Year 2, pupils are taught to:

- Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another.
- Start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined.
- Write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters.
- Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

1.6. During Years 3 and 4, pupils are taught to:

- Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined.
- Increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting (e.g. by ensuring that the down-strokes of letters are parallel and equidistant, and that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch).

1.7. During Years 5 and 6, pupils are taught to:

- Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by:

- Choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters.
- Choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

2. Practising handwriting

- 2.1. Pupils are encouraged to practise their handwriting skills on a daily basis, with separate time allocated in the timetable to allow pupils to practise and develop their movement memory.
- 2.2. It is vital that pupils develop the correct handwriting techniques. With this in mind, teachers and teaching assistants ensure that any errors are immediately corrected, and pupils can practise their corrections.
- 2.3. At the beginning of every academic year, a letter is sent to parents/carers explaining the school's methods for teaching handwriting. This letter will also explain how parents/carers can encourage pupils to practise at home.
- 2.4. Parents/carers will be provided with a set of exercises which pupils can practise at home; these exercises will be designed by the pupil's teacher, and will be specific to their year group.

3. Teaching and learning

- 3.1. All adults in school are expected to use the school handwriting style when modelling writing to our children.
- 3.2. Where appropriate resources should be labelled using our school font.
- 3.3. The Senior Leadership team regularly monitor pupils' work to ensure that there is continuity in teaching methods across year groups and key stages.
- 3.4. Pupils are taught to recognise and appreciate patterns and lines. Patterns are used initially, by writing with a variety of tools and using multisensory methods, to help free flowing hand motions.
- 3.5. Pupils are supported in finding a comfortable and effective grip for holding their writing implement.
- 3.6. Pupils are encouraged to hold their writing implements correctly, away from the point to ensure the line of vision is not interrupted.
- 3.7. The importance of neat and clear presentation is clearly communicated to pupils; successful teaching leads to pupils taking pride in the appearance of their work.
- 3.8. Pupils are encouraged to have the correct seating position when learning; the bottom of the back needs to be in contact with the back of their chair.

- 3.9. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to write quickly, whilst maintaining clear and accurate presentation.
- 3.10. Pupils are taught to write on a range of textures such as whiteboards, blackboards, and different types of paper.
- 3.11. Teachers display examples of correct handwriting in the classroom, along with examples of the highest standard of work by pupils. Examples of work are also on display around the school.
- 3.12. New members of staff who will be involved in teaching handwriting will receive a copy of this policy.

4. Pupils who are left-handed

- 4.1. Paper is always positioned to the far right for left-handed pupils and slanted to suit their individual needs.
- 4.2. Left-handed pupils are always seated to the left of a right-handed pupil in order to avoid competition for space.
- 4.3. Left-handed pupils may be given additional supervision and practice time to ensure they are making the same progress as other pupils.

5. Assessment

- 5.1. Teachers regularly monitor the progress of pupils during lessons. When observing pupils, teachers consider the following questions:
 - Is the pupil's posture correct?
 - Is the pupil holding the pencil properly?
 - Is the pupil using the correct movement when forming and joining letters?
 - Are the letters reversed or inverted?
 - Does the pupil have a fluent writing style?
 - Is the writing legible?
 - Is the pupil making the expected progress set out in the national curriculum?
- 5.2. Children who are identified as struggling with handwriting and presentation may be given further support through handwriting intervention.

6. Examples of cursive script

- 6.1. The first writing alphabet that is taught in Early Years looks like this:

6.2. Precursive

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

6.3. It is important to show where each letter starts and how it is formed.

6.4. All letters start from the line.

6.5. The 'joined' alphabet that we teach looks like this:

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

6.6. Some letters join from the top when in a word: o. r. v. w. The letter x. does not join.

6.7. Capital letters do not join.

7. Resources and Writing Materials

7.1. Handwriting books with pairs of lines are used to help to achieve appropriate height and even formation of letters.

7.2. Guidelines are also used with plain paper when redrafting where appropriate.

7.3. Adapted pencils or an additional grip may be used to support identified children.

7.4. In some instances, writing boards may be used.

7.5. 'Letterjoin' software is used in classes to support the teaching of handwriting.

7.6. Each class has a cursive script on display on the wall as well as 'mats' to remind children of the correct script.

8. What else can be done to support those children struggling with handwriting?

8.1. Children can practise other 'fine motor' manipulative skills. This could include tying knots and bows, ball games, Lego, jigsaws, clay, play dough, painting, colouring, finger painting, threading beads and sewing.

8.2. It is important that children hold pencils between the thumb and first finger. Pressure should be even - never heavy.

- 8.3. Sitting correctly, with good posture, a satisfactory work surface and sufficient light are important when s/he is writing or drawing.
- 8.4. Further guidance can be found on this website:
<http://www.teachhandwriting.co.uk/handwriting-advice-sitting-pencil-grip-paper-tilt-angle-left-handed-writers.html>

9. Policy review

- 9.1. This policy is reviewed every two years by the headteacher.
- 9.2. The scheduled review date for this policy is November 2020.