



# HANDWRITING POLICY

## School Mission Statement

At Garstang Community Primary School we treasure each and every one of our pupils. We create inspirational learning opportunities in a vibrant, supportive environment in which our pupils grow together and are excited about their future in an ever changing world.

## Aims

- We recognise the individuality of each of our pupils and nurture them emotionally, socially, spiritually, morally and culturally.
- We create inspirational learning opportunities within an exciting curriculum which equips our pupils with the skills and knowledge needed to be successful in a dynamic world.
- Our pupils become enterprising, inquisitive young people with high expectations of themselves and a lifelong love of learning.
- We develop strong partnerships with parents, creating an atmosphere of mutual trust, and working together to provide the very best for our pupils.
- We create opportunities for our pupils to be active participants in the local and global communities and to develop an understanding of their place in the world.

Policy created: February 2019

Date reviewed	Changes made	Signed
October 2019	Addition of Pen Licence criteria	SN

# Garstang Community Primary School

## Handwriting Policy

February 2019

At Garstang Community Primary School we recognise that achievement writing plays a huge part in the future life chances of our pupils.

Good handwriting remains fundamental to our pupils' success in writing and every area of the school curriculum. Pupils who develop fast, fluent, neat and legible handwriting take pride in their work, feel a sense of achievement and are empowered to write creatively. We believe that all of our pupils are entitled to develop this essential skill.

## English Curriculum Policy - Handwriting

This Policy should be read alongside the GCP English Curriculum Policy.

### Introduction

Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the writing implement should be the correct size for the child and not be too large for a young pupil's hand. Whatever is being used should allow the pupil to hold it easily and correctly so that bad habits are avoided. Pupils should learn correct letter formation in the early years and be given opportunities to practise and consolidate their skills. As soon as pupils can form letters correctly, with the correct orientations, they should be taught to write with a joined style.

To support the teaching and learning of handwriting at our school, we use *Penpals for Handwriting*, a scheme of work published by Cambridge. This scheme is used to plan a clear progression of skills from EYFS through to Year 6. The scheme provides us with teaching resources to support the planning, teaching, learning and assessment of handwriting. Teachers may supplement the scheme with resources sourced from other places and will create their own resources to support their teaching. The font used in our handwriting scheme is *Sassoon Penpals Joined*. Word documents and activity sheets can be made to suit the pupils' needs and the font can be used through Lynx 4, PowerPoint and Word.

Teachers may also choose to create handwritten activities and resources, in line with our handwriting policy.

### Statutory Requirements

Statutory requirements for the teaching and learning of English are laid out in the National Curriculum (2014) and Literacy (Specific) Areas of the Statutory Framework for Early Years and Foundation Stage (2012).

### In EYFS

Pupils are given opportunities to develop their gross and fine motor skills through a variety of engaging large and small movement activities. As part of their ongoing physical development, pupils engage in daily handwriting activities including 'Dough Disco', 'Ribbon Writing', using tools and equipment, taking part in artistic activities, making and modelling, hand and finger play.

Pupils have plenty of opportunities to create patterns, exploring straight lines, loops, circles and angled patterns.

Pupils are taught how to hold a pencil using a correct pencil hold and to sit with good posture. Development of posture and pencil hold allows pupils to sustain handwriting for longer periods as they mature.

When ready, pupils begin to develop their knowledge of letter formation, meeting letters from each particular family, where letters are formed in similar ways:

1. Long ladder family (l, i, t, u, j, y)
2. One armed robot letters (r, b, n, h, m, k, p)
3. Capital letters for one armed robot letters (R, B, N, H, M, K, P)
4. Capital letters for long ladder letters (L, I, T, U, J, Y)
5. Curly caterpillar letters (c, a, d, o, s, g, q, e, f)
6. Zig-zag monster letters (z, v, w, x)
7. Capital letters for curly caterpillar letters (C, A, D, O, S, G, Q, E, F)
8. Capital letters for zig-zag monster letters (Z, V, W, X)
9. Exploring ch, th and sh

### **In Key Stage 1**

In Key Stage 1, pupils have regular opportunities to revisit and consolidate letter formation. They use a handwriting book and over time use lines to form letters consistently and evenly, focusing on the comparative heights of each letter. Pupils apply their handwriting skills across the curriculum and take pride in the quality of their work.

Pupils continue to be taught handwriting skills explicitly and strong connections are made between handwriting and spelling.

The skills taught and learned in Key Stage 1 follow this pattern:

1. Revisit and practise each letter family from EYFS
2. Revisit and practise vowel formation
3. Revisit and practise the formation of capital letters
4. Introduce and practise diagonal joins (e.g. at, th, in, cr, id, ng)
5. Introduce and practise horizontal joins (e.g. op, oy, one, oa, ol, wh, of, if)
6. Introduce and practise break letters ((j, g, x, y, z, b, f, p, q, r, s)
7. Introduce a wider range of joins (ar, as, ws, si, su, rs, ft, fl, qu, ff, ss)
8. Capital letter practise

### **In Key Stage 2**

Pupils continue to benefit from skilful, explicit teaching of handwriting. Pupils use line guides in plain books across the curriculum and use an unlined handwriting book.

Teacher use their assessments to intervene in a timely way when pupils demonstrate misconceptions and misunderstandings in handwriting.

Pupils have the opportunity to:

1. Revise letter formation and joins from Key Stage 1
2. Introduce and practise a wider range of joins (e.g. ba, pa, ph)
3. Develop relative sizes of letters
4. Work on consistency in layout, spacing, speed and fluency
5. Develop their own style of handwriting

### **Assessment of Handwriting**

The most effective assessment of handwriting is ongoing assessment. This gives us the opportunity to spot errors and inconsistencies that are likely to impede a fast, fluent hand in the future. Errors in letter formation must be tackled early in order to prevent pupils learning and incorrect form.

### **Resources and Writing Materials**

Across the school, children are given experience of a variety of writing tools for example: whiteboard markers, pencils, felt-tip pens and handwriting pens.

We aim for all of our children to be using blue handwriting pens in their written work by the time they enter Year 6. We believe that writing in pen is less restrictive than pencil and aids a child's fluency. Unlike a 'blunt' pencil, ink pen also improves overall 'precision' and quality of presentation.

If a child's handwriting meets the required standard before they reach year 6, their teacher, in consultation with the English Subject Leader, may award them with a special Pencil Licence (Key Stage 1) or a Pen Licence (Key Stage 2). The criteria for achieving these can be found in Appendix 1 of this document. Until a Pen Licence has been awarded (or Year 6), pupils will write in pencil across all subjects.

Children are always encouraged to write with a sharp pencil and to cross mistakes out with a line drawn with a ruler. Rubbers may only be used for presentation pieces and for diagrams, charts and drawings. Pencils should continue to be used throughout the school for notes, drafting, all maths work, diagrams, charts and maps. For pen licensees, children will be provided with blue pens and these may be used for writing across the curriculum. For consistency, biros, gel pens or pupils' own pens are not used at any time. Special Fountain Pen Licences will be given out in Year 5 and 6 to children who meet the extra criteria detailed at the bottom of the Pen Licence. Children with this award may bring a fountain pen in from home and use this for writing across the curriculum. Blue ink must always be used. Correction fluid

is also not allowed, although sticky white labels may be cut to an appropriate size in order to cover an error on a 'presentation' copy.

Handwriting exercise books with coloured lines to assist with accuracy and consistency in size and form are used throughout the school. In both key stages, pupils work on both lined and plain paper. For the latter, they are expected to use a line-guide and paperclips to hold the guide in place. A variety of styles of font are available using word-processing programmes on the computer. Children will be able to select the most appropriate one for their style of work.

### **Inclusion**

All of our pupils are provided with equal access to our English curriculum. We provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

Through skilful teaching of handwriting, we expect the vast majority of our pupils to achieve age related expectations in handwriting. However, we recognise that occasionally, some pupils may find handwriting challenging for a variety of reasons. When this is the case, our approaches to the teaching and learning of handwriting will be adapted and differentiated to ensure that all pupils make progress. This may be through additional intervention handwriting sessions, use of whiteboards or revisiting age-related learning from a prior stage.

The 'tripod' pencil hold is the recommended pencil hold and the pencil hold we endeavor to teach our pupils. However, there are other pencil holds, particularly for left-handers. Comfort of the hold and efficiency under speed is our priority. Pupils will be given pencil grips when appropriate.

### **Linked Policies**

This policy should be read alongside other school policies including:

- Teaching and learning policy
- Assessment policy
- Marking and feedback policy
- SEND policy
- Equal opportunities policy

## Appendix I

### Pencil Licence Criteria

- Form digits 0 – 9 correctly
- All capital letters and lower case letters are clear and used correctly
- Any mistakes are crossed out neatly with one neat line and a ruler
- Writing is beginning to be joined
- Presentation is always done with care

### Pen Licence Criteria

- All of the pencil licence criteria
  - All letters are formed correctly, sit on the line with clear descenders and ascenders which are mainly consistent
  - Form digits 0 – 9 correctly
  - All capital letters and lower case letters are clear and used correctly
  - Any mistakes are crossed out neatly with one neat line and a ruler
  - Writing is beginning to be joined
  - Presentation is always done with care
- All work is dated, titled and underlined with a ruler

- All work is written from the start of the margin
- Writing is consistently joined
- Letters are joined appropriately
- There is a clear distinction between the size of capital and lower case letters
- Punctuation is the correct size in relation to the text

### **Fountain Pen Licence Criteria**

- All of the pencil and pen licence criteria
- Writing has a consistent style which is neat, joined, legible and personal
- Presentation in all your books is at an impeccable standard