

Handwriting at Southover School

Intent

Our approach to handwriting offers a consistent approach to help teachers ensure they have progressively covered the skills required to meet the aims of the National Curriculum and the related Early Learning Goals.

Step 1

We want children to develop their fine and gross motor skills and pencil control as a precursor to effective handwriting. We want children:

- to show good control and coordination in large and small movements,
- to move confidently in a range of ways while safely negotiating space,
- to handle equipment and tools effectively and to safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques.

Children will be introduced to the letters as they cover them in phonics.

Steps 2 and 3

We aim to teach children the statutory objectives from the year 1 and year 2 curriculum. Children will be taught:

- to sit correctly at a table,
- to hold a pencil comfortably and correctly,
- to begin to form lower case letters in the correct direction and of the correct size relative to one another,
- to start and finish letters in the right place,
- to form capital letters and the digits 0-9 of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower case letters,
- to understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families',
- to start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and to use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

Steps 4 and 5 (Joining Letters and Fluency, Style & Speed)

We will teach the statutory skills from the year 3 - year 6 curriculum. Children will be taught:

- to use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters,
- to increase the legibility, fluency, consistency and quality of their handwriting,
- to ensure that their lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch,
- to write with increasing speed.

Disabilities & Equalities Statement

All children are given full access to the National Curriculum/EYFS Statutory Framework. Staff will endeavour to ensure that all children reach their potential, irrespective of race, gender, age, home-background or ability. Southover is committed to promoting equality. When planning and teaching handwriting, staff will make reasonable adjustments to promote equality of opportunity. Adaptations can be made to meet a child's special need.

Implementation

How we teach Handwriting at Southover

We will actively teach handwriting - focused sessions where we model and support. Handwriting is taught in short, explicit, regular sessions focussing on letter formation, consistent size and shape of letters, as well as accurate joining. Adult support can be modelling on the IWB, on a flipchart, or paper, book or whiteboard with small groups. Handwriting should not be working on pages of sheets which leave children to consolidate their errors.

Learning is differentiated based on the needs of the child.

Handwriting is applied in all writing and modelling, as well as in displays, where appropriate. Children will see a variety of handwriting styles used in displays and in text as they will throughout life but teachers should predominantly model the taught style when creating flipcharts and in their own writing. (We do not expect teachers to re-create flipcharts they already have because of the need for work-life balance).

All teachers give specific attention to pencil and pen control, grip and posture in helping pupils to develop a legible style. "Pick, flip and grip" are the stages to finding the correct grip.

Teachers identify all left-handed pupils in their class. Left-handers should always sit on the left of a right-handed child to avoid collision.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are involved in a variety of activities to develop their physical development. Handwriting emerges from the shoulder joint, then to elbow and lastly to wrist and finger joints. In the Early Years we support and progress this development in the following ways:

- Development of motor skills through activities such as sweeping, threading, weaving, modelling, cooking and craft.
- Using music alongside writing to encourage patterns, curves and repetition.
- Fine motor skills groups to learn and develop in this area, leading to better balance, coordination and mark making.
- Handwriting sessions: These are done with the adults in the classroom to support and develop children's letter formation and fine motor skills.

- Opportunities for mark making are planned in both the inside and outside environment.
- Children are offered a range of materials and experiences for mark making. from chalks and charcoal to crayons and flour.
- When teachers are modelling activities, they demonstrate and encourage correct pencil grip.

In Reception, Children are taught how to form individual letters accurately in line with the agreed letter formation (See Appendix 1) alongside phonic teaching using a variety of strategies. In EYFS children will learn the letters without lead ins or outs.

During Y1 (usually from spring term) children will learn to add lead ins and outs. Some children may begin to join as they progress through Y1 and Y2. Handwriting paper with ascender guides supports them well.

In Y3 children be taught to join in a cursive script.

In KS2, all children use pens for all writing excluding maths (unless there is a special need that means pencil is best). We allow blue biro's or Berol pens to be used by all from Y3 onwards.

When teaching letter formation outside of EYFS, we will usually do this in letter families:

Ladder letters: l i u t y j

One armed robots: n m h k b p r

Curly caterpillars: c a d g q o

Curly caterpillars: s f e

Zigzag monsters: z v w x

Impact

The impact of handwriting can be seen through the work in the children's books across the curriculum

When they leave Y2, children should be able to form all lowercase and uppercase letters correctly and in a relative size to each other with suitable spacing between words. They should be beginning to use lead ins and outs needed to join letters.

When children leave Y6, they will be able to write in a joined and fluent cursive style.

