



Burnhope Primary School **Handwriting and Presentation Policy**



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1. Curriculum Statement

Intent

At Burnhope Primary, the importance of children being able to write legibly, fluently and at a reasonable speed is recognised. With these skills, children have a much greater chance of being able to reach and demonstrate their true potential throughout their school careers and in their lives beyond school. The programme of study at Burnhope Primary seeks to ensure that by the end of KS1, children have a sense of pride and respect in their work which raises self-esteem.

In the EYFS, children are taught to use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds, as well as some common words with irregular spellings. Planned opportunities are provided for the children to develop writing simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Children develop the use of effective pencil grip throughout their time in reception.

In KS1, children handwriting practice focuses on ensuring that children form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another. It develops their use of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and promotes understand of which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined. Children also develop accuracy in writing capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters and use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters. Children are taught to write with a joined style in Year 2, as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

Throughout KS2, emphasis is placed on children's development of writing legibly, fluently and with increasing speed. Emphasis is placed on children being taught to choose which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters, as well as choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

Implementation

To ensure a consistent approach, the school subscribes to Letter join and children are explicitly taught the skill of handwriting. In reception and KS1, the children use separate workbooks to record and practise their handwriting. In KS2, the outcome is recorded directly into the back of children's English books. Across the school, handwriting is carefully modelled by the teacher and outcomes are recorded by the children in their English books.

The use of patterns to support letter formation and appropriate letter-joins is also embedded enabling children to also further develop their fine motor skills.

High expectations are also communicated as part the success criteria for the lesson. A high standard of presentation is also encouraged and expected in children's written work across the wider curriculum.

Impact

This systematic approach ensures development in the skill of handwriting throughout each year group. Children take pride in their written work and achieve proficiency. Outcomes in children's wider curriculum work, as well as in their English books and school displays, evidence the progress that children make in this area, as well as the consistency of the approach across the school.

2. Teaching and Learning

At Burnhope Primary School handwriting will be taught using the 'Letter Join' scheme from Reception to Year 6. This scheme includes: online modelling, worksheets, series of lessons and virtual formation on iPad. We have also installed the Letter Join font on the computers. This will be used by staff for worksheets and display materials where appropriate.

- Children are encouraged to maintain a correct posture and pencil grip.
- Children should sit at a desk with feet flat on the floor, their head up and with paper at the correct angle. The 'Letter Join' scheme includes pictures and descriptions of good pencil hold and posture.
- Handwriting is taught from EYFS to Year 2 in discrete lessons across the school. In addition to this, children will be given the opportunity to practise handwriting for 5-10 minutes at least three times per week.
- Children will be encouraged to apply their handwriting skills across the curriculum. ☐ Opportunities for linking phonics and spelling are used.
- Additional handwriting sessions are given to those children whose letter formation, joining or speed require improvement.
- Children write in pencil. From Year 3, they will be given a pen licence when they consistently use neat, joined handwriting. Children who have a pen licence will use blue pen in all lessons, except maths and for drawing graphs and diagrams.
- All children will use a purple pen for corrections and improvements.

Handwriting Lessons may include the following activities:

- Warm up activities using the website. These are intended to prepare the body for handwriting and to develop gross and fine motor control.
- Sky writing patterns – drawing patterns in the air with a finger. ☐ Identifying common errors.
- Links with phonics or spellings.
- Writing in practice books, handwriting books or on worksheets.
- Teaching efficient pencil hold and good posture.

3. Assessment

3.1 Teacher assessment:

Teachers will assess children's handwriting progression during lessons as they write as well as once they have completed their writing.

Criteria for assessment may include:

- Does the child adopt the correct posture?
- Does the child hold the pencil correctly?
- Does the child use the correct movements when forming/joining?
- Does the child write fluently? ☐ Is the writing legible?
- Is the writing appropriate?
- Is the child's handwriting developing in-line with statutory curricula?

3.2 Pupil assessment:

Throughout the writing process, children are encouraged to assess their own handwriting by using good examples of their own or displayed examples. The expectation for a high standard of handwriting is also communicated prior to writing tasks. When explicitly indicated in the children's success criteria, this is an aspect of the outcome which is reviewed and assessed by each child on completion of the task. Neat presentation is always recognised and praised by the class teacher and children are encouraged to review their handwriting as part of the writing process.

3.3 Whole-school assessment:

The subject leader for literacy will regularly assess handwriting across the school. Criteria for whole-school assessment may include:

- Is the handwriting generally legible and pleasant?
- Are letters being shaped correctly?
- Are joins being made correctly?
- Are spaces between letters, words and lines correct?
- Is writing size appropriate?
- Are the writing standards demonstrated by the majority of children in line with statutory curricula?

4. Planning and Resources

At Burnhope Primary, we will teach the children to write using the Letter join program. The most up-to-date edition of the scheme guides children through carefully structured stages from pre-writing patterns all the way to the development of individual style.

- Teachers can use the Nelson Teacher's books, Resources and online teaching tool to deliver high-quality handwriting lessons.
- Letter join font is also available on all school PCs so that all communication can be presented to children using the font.
- Most Year 6 children move to using a handwriting pen over the course of the first term. Some children may begin to use a pen from as early as Year 4. Children use handwriting pen in English books as well as Topic. The rate of transition from pencil to pen will be determined by the class teacher, on an individual-basis and in consultation with each pupil.
- EYFS-Year 5 children will write in HB pencil in all exercise books.

5. Organisation

From Reception through to Year 6, there are weekly handwriting sessions. In KS2, these take place within English lessons. Regular additional opportunities to practise are also provided, for example, presenting work for display or writing final drafts.

6. EYFS

It is important for children to understanding the importance of clear and neat handwriting from an early age. Correct letter formation is taught in both Nursery and Reception and children are given opportunities to independently practise their handwriting. Children are also given plenty of opportunities to develop the fine motor skills they need for accurate handwriting through continuous provision in the EYFS setting.

- Children are taught correct letter and number formation in a letter join style, moving from single letters to words and sentences.
- Children are free to select a writing implement of their choice in child initiated learning.
- Correct sitting and pencil grip is taught.
- Phrases from RWInc. Phonics gives children a hook in which to remember the formation.
- They are encouraged to write in a straight line from left to right.
- Use of rulers for labelling is modelled by teachers and rulers are available for child initiated learning.
- Writing is always demonstrated by using a line and some children begin to write 'on the line'.
- Children will develop gross motor skills, fine motor skills and letter movements through a range of multi-sensory approaches, including 'Dough Gym'.

7. KS1 and KS2

In KS1 and KS2, handwriting continues to be taught discretely using the Letter join program. In KS1 the children will continue to use handwriting practice books and KS2, the children will record their handwriting practise directly into their English books.

In KS1, the children will continue to develop their pre-cursive handwriting with increasing fluency and speed.

In Year 1 and 2

- Children are taught how to join letters, maintain regular size and shape of letters and regular spaces between words.
- Children develop the fluency of their joined handwriting at word and sentence level.
- Children are taught to write 'on the line'.
- Children are taught how to underline and label neatly with a ruler.

In KS2, the children progress to write legibly in a cursive style with increasing fluency and speed.

In Years 3 and 4

- Children work on securing joins, improving fluency and continuing spelling links.
- Children are expected and taught how to use a ruler to draw lines, including underlining, diagrams, labelling and crossing out.
- Children write in paragraphs around a theme.
- Children are taught to adapt the layout of their written work to fit the intended purpose, i.e. letter presentation, play script, etc.

In Years 5 and 6

- Children are expected to use a ruler to draw lines, including underlining, diagrams, labelling and crossing out.
- Teaching of handwriting continues to develop an efficient writing speed and aids spelling.

- Children learn to select the most appropriate presentation style for different writing genres.
- They begin to understand the balance between speed and legibility which is dependent on the purpose of the writing: the product or the final draft of a piece of writing.

8. Equal Opportunities

Burnhope Primary is committed to ensuring the active participation and progress of all children in their learning. All children will be given equal opportunities to achieve their best possible standard, whatever their current attainment and irrespective of gender, ethnic, social or cultural background, home language or any other aspect that could affect their participation or the progress of which they are capable.

9. Inclusion

9.1 Children with English as an additional language

Children with EAL are encouraged to make the same outstanding progress in handwriting as their peers. To support their understanding of letter formation handwriting should be consistently modelled by the class teacher.

9.2 Children with Special Educational Needs

Some children experience difficulties making good progress in their handwriting development. They may need additional support with their fine motor development, pencil grip or letter formation. The class teacher should liaise with the English subject leader and SENDCo to put into place the most appropriate form of support.

This could include:

- Pencil grip or jumbo triangular pencil
- Fine motor skills intervention
- Additional handwriting group

High Achievers Children with advanced skills in handwriting will be supported and given opportunities for extension work.

10. Role of the Subject Leader

The role of the subject leader is to coordinate the teaching of handwriting across all phases of the school. This is in order to secure a consistent approach across the school and to ensure progression in handwriting is continuous.

Some key duties that the English subject leader should undertake over the course of the year include:

- Monitoring of handwriting in handwriting and English books.
- Monitoring of the application of handwriting across other curriculum exercise books.
- Helping identify and facilitate the professional development needs of staff.
- Liaising with the school SENDCo to best support children with handwriting difficulties
- Organising, maintaining and cataloguing handwriting resources
- Keeping abreast of new initiatives in the teaching of handwriting

11. Parents

We recognise how important the home-school link is for children to make continuous progress in all areas of learning – including handwriting. Parents will be informed of their child's standards of presentation during Parents' Evenings and will be encouraged to support with any additional handwriting practice where necessary.

In Reception, children are given letter formation homework as and when they learn a new Set 1 sound. From then on, handwriting homework will only be given if a child needs additional support to make good progress in their handwriting and presentation.

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