



## Beardall Fields Primary and Nursery School

### Handwriting Policy

At Beardall Fields Primary and Nursery School, we strive to teach our children to take pride in all their work and have developed this policy to ensure the high expectations of all children in all of their work.

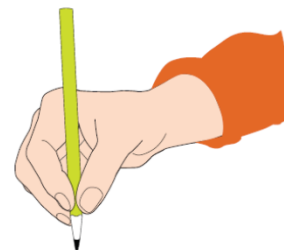
#### Intent

Handwriting is a skill which, like reading and spelling, affects written communication across the curriculum. Children must be able to write with ease, speed and legibility.

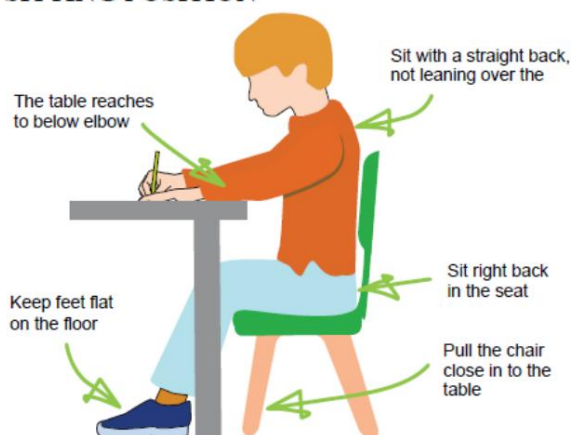
The school expects children to develop a cursive (joined) style. This teaches children to join letters and words as a series of flowing movements and patterns. A cursive script enables children to develop a neat style and can help children to speed up their writing. Children who write quickly generally get more words on the paper and produce better quality content. Cursive writing also promotes making links to words as whole units as the children develop muscle memory of the movements of each word that encourages spelling that is more accurate.

#### Implementation

Staff will ensure the correct modelling of handwriting is adopted consistently across the curriculum. The school has an agreed style and correct formation of letters is accessible for all children within the classroom, either displayed on the classroom wall or handwriting mats/prompt cards. Children will be shown how to hold their pencils correctly using a tripod grip.



#### SITTING POSITION



Children should also maintain an upright sitting position whilst writing.

Left-handers will be identified and where possible, will sit on the right of a right-handed child to avoid collision. Left-handers may also angle their work to the right so that they can see what they have written without pulling their hand over their writing. This should also prevent 'hooking', where left-handers try to

write from above the line they are writing in order to be able to see their work.

Each class will carry out a minimum of 30 minutes taught handwriting per week. This may be as a combined session, linked with another area of the curriculum but must include a formal teaching session and practice time.

- In EYFS and KS1, handwriting is taught within daily phonics sessions but isn't limited to this.
- In KS2 there is a minimum taught session of 15 minutes, with an additional 15 minutes given to the implementation/practise of these skills. This may be linked to spelling to allow for the consolidation of phonemic spelling patterns/choices.

In KS1 children will carry out their handwriting practise within their phonic booklets/phonic blue books, and if necessary, at the back of their green writing books.

In KS2, all handwriting will be carried out within the purple English skills books.

[www.cursivewriting.org](http://www.cursivewriting.org) supports the modelling of individual letter formation through to cursive joined handwriting.

### **In Nursery:**

Children begin to explore the concept of mark-making using a variety of tools and materials. We encourage the use of 'chunky' pencils and support children in giving meaning to the marks they make by:

- Developing an understanding of simple patterns, such as lines, circles, and zigzags
- Beginning the transition toward using a tripod grip
- Starting to recognise and write their own name with adult support
- Exploring a range of writing tools, including felt-tip pens, chalks, pencils, and paintbrushes

As part of our weekly routine, children participate in 'Squiggle While You Wiggle' and 'Dough Disco'.

These activities are designed to strengthen hand dexterity and support the development of gross motor skills. We recognise that shoulder strength and upper body mobility are essential foundations for fine motor control, including pencil grip and writing.

### **Reception: Fine Motor Skill Progression and Early Writing**

In Reception, children continue to build on their fine motor skills, with a specific focus on hand dexterity. During Autumn Term 1, we deliver daily 'Dough Disco' sessions (which build on the skills learnt in Nursery) using playdough, alongside a structured morning routine that includes fine motor activities such as threading, peg use, and manipulating small objects.

Each child is then assessed using our 'Clever Hands' programme during Autumn Term 1. This identifies children who may require additional support with pencil grip, shape formation, and

early letter writing. Identified children will then participate in 'Clever Hands' intervention groups from Autumn Term 2. These daily sessions support children in developing a correct tripod grip and learning to write their own name. Our goal is for every child to independently write their first name by December—ready for writing to Santa!

### Letter Formation and Writing Support

In Autumn Term 2, children are introduced to our letter formation, which categorises letters into:

- Curly Caterpillars
- Long Ladder Letters
- One-Armed Robots
- Zigzag Monsters

Weekly guided sessions take place in the children's curriculum books, with children seated at a table to promote correct posture and focus.

To support early letter formation, we use yellow highlighters to provide visual guidance. Where necessary, some children may also be given a three-finger pencil grip aid, which offers temporary support in developing correct pencil control, tailored to their individual needs.

By the end of the Reception year, our aim is for all children to:

- Demonstrate the correct tripod grip
- Form most of the lower-case letters correctly
- Form capital letter from their name/s
- Develop an awareness of other capital letters and how they are formed
- Form the numerals from 0 to 9
- Learn the correct starting point when forming lower case letters
- Recognise the correct orientation of each lower-case letter

**In Year 1**, the children will continue to build on the skills taught in Reception to ensure children have:

- The correct tripod grip (pencil grippers, tripod pencils and other interventions to be used)
- All Lower-case letter formations using the correct orientation
- Lower-case formation of the correct size, in relation to the lines they are writing on, most of the time
- Capital letter formation
- Numeral formation

**In Year 2**, the children will have:

- Embedded the skills taught in EYFS and Year 1 consistently
- Secure number formation consistently
- Begin to use lead-in letters
- Begin using the initial joins linked to phonics/spellings – ai, oa, ie, ee, ea, oo, oi, th, ch, sh

**In Year 3**, the children will:

- Embed KS1 skills
- Embed KS1 initial joins
- Show clear ascenders, descenders
- Introduce and embed new joins – ay, ow, igh, or, wh, ph, se, aw, ng, nk, ve, ey, ou, oi, oy, ue, er, ar, ce, oe, air, are, ear, ere, eer, ear, ier, ir, ur, our

**In Year 4** onwards, the children will:

- Build on previous learning
- Ensure use of clear ascenders, descenders consistently
- Introduce the trickier joins from f, z and r
- Begin to show a fluent style, joining all letters

Pupils who find one or two letters difficult to form will be given specific practice for these letters via targeted handwriting booklets and interventions if necessary.

Some pupils have difficulties making their handwriting legible either through formation or fine motor difficulties. In agreement with the phase leader, these pupils may use a black ballpoint (biro) pen to help with legibility.

### **Vocabulary:**

#### **EYFS and KS1**

- Curly Caterpillars – c, a, d, g, q, e, s, f, o
- Long Ladder Letters – l, i, t, j, y, u
- One-Armed Robots – r, b, n, h, m, k, p
- Zigzag Monsters – v, w, x, z

#### **KS2**

- x height– a c e i m n o r s u v w x z
- ascenders – b d f h k l
- descenders – g j p q y
- t (special)
- clock-wise
- anti-clockwise

### Pen Licence

As joined writing doesn't fully begin until Year 3, children will only begin writing with pen from Year 3 onwards, with the expectation that ALL children will begin Y5 writing in pen.

To encourage all children to take pride in their written work and always present their work as neatly as possible, we will introduce the use of pens using the following criteria.

In order for children to be able to write in pen, the children must:

- Form all letters correctly in the correct orientation
- Write on the line
- Ensure all handwriting is the correct size, not too big or too small
- Ensure all handwriting is joined using the correct joins

To be awarded a pen licence, the child must fulfil all the criteria above.

This is under the discretion of the class teacher, who can decide if pen is to be used initially during handwriting practise (to ensure that there is no dip in presentation whilst getting used to writing in pen) or in all written work (if the child is consistently using neat handwriting, which meets all of the criteria.) This is to ensure all children move effortlessly towards becoming a naturally fluent writer at their own pace.

Children will be expected to maintain a high standard of handwriting and are encouraged to take pride in their work. This will be continuously monitored by adults in school, with additional support given through intervention if necessary. Our aim is that by Year 6, children will have adopted their own style of continuous cursive handwriting using flowing movements and patterns. Adults will ensure that this does not compromise our school expectations and lead to untidy/illegible writing. Through monitoring, adults will ensure high expectation of handwriting and presentation is maintained.

All pupils in lower KS2 will need to work towards these high standards. If by Year 5 a pupil has not moved onto writing in pen, they will be allowed to write in pen but will still be reminded to work on correct formation and neat presentation and an intervention may be put into place to support this.

### Impact

Handwriting is a skill which affects written communication across the curriculum. Our aim is that children are able to write with ease, speed and legibility.

This handwriting should be demonstrated in all writing across the curriculum. Writing should be fluid in style to allow children to apply their energy into the content of their writing as opposed to the formation of the letters themselves.

The school agreed font is:

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Points to note:

There is no join from any of the descender letters apart from p and q e.g pill

o, r, v, w join from the top: our, run, van, will

f joins from the cross: for, few

There is no join from the x

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o  
p q r s t u v w x y z

