



# HANDWRITING POLICY

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# Sandal Magna Handwriting Policy

## Introduction

At Sandal Magna Community Academy, we believe that handwriting is a skill which needs to be taught regularly. It is a movement skill which affects all areas of written communication for all children. We therefore feel it should be practised correctly and regularly so to avoid ineffective handwriting styles that will be harder to correct as the child becomes older.

## Our Aims

Encourage children to understand the importance of clear and neat presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively. Children are able to legibly write in both joined and printed styles with increasing fluency and speed by:

- having the correct pencil grip
- knowing all letters start from the line
- forming all letters correctly
- knowing the size and orientation of letters
- promote confidence and self-esteem in writing
- inspire children to take pride in their work
- support the teaching and learning of spellings.

Help children recognise that handwriting is a lifelong skill and will be a fundamental element of all forms of written communication throughout their life.

## Organisation and Planning

Staff will follow the Sheffield Handwriting Scheme and letters will be taught in family groups.

Children will practise handwriting in an English book rather than using handwriting paper. Handwriting sessions will be taught throughout the whole of school.

In Nursery, teachers will model and use pre-cursive entry and exits flicks and children when practising writing will use resources which display pre-cursive print.

In Upper Foundation and Year 1 teachers will model and use a cursive writing starting on the line.

Children in Year 1 will begin to use a joined cursive style unless they have a specific fine motor skill need.

In Year 2, children will use a joined cursive style starting from the line unless identified by Foundation Stage and Year 1 as needing to use a basic cursive print.

There will be a minimum of three discreet sessions a week.

Handwriting will be taught by the class teacher and techniques will be discussed with the class.

All children, regardless of age, who are deemed to have a joined legible handwriting style will receive a pen license and write in black pen.

### Techniques

- Model good handwriting all the time.
- Demonstrate correct letter formation.
- Talk through the process.
- Encourage the children to verbalise process.
- Children form letters in the air.
- Finger trace over tactile letters.
- Write over highlighter pen (or dotted letters).
- Draw round templates.
- Write in sand with finger or stick.
- Write with chalk on chalkboard.
- Form letters in beads with plasticine.
- Finger trace the outline of letters on the back of person in front of you.
- Finger trace the outline of letters on the table / palm of their hand.

### Posture and Seating for Writing

- The chair and table should be a comfortable height.
- The table should support the forearm so that it rests lightly on the surface and is parallel to the floor.
- Encourage children to sit up straight and not slouch.
- The height of the chair should be such that the thighs are horizontal and feet flat on the floor.
- Tables should be clutter free.
- Rooms should be well lit.
- Left handed pupils should sit on the left of their partners.

### Advice for Teaching Correct Pencil Grip

Children should write with a pencil (or pen once they have achieved a pen license) with a rounded nib.

Pencils should be reasonably sharp.

A tripod grip is the most efficient way of holding a pencil.

#### *For right handers*

- Hold lightly between the thumb and forefinger about 3cm away from the point.
- The paper should be placed to the right slightly tilted to the left.

- Use the left hand to steady the paper.

### *For left handers*

- Hold lightly between the thumb and forefinger resting on the first knuckle of the middle finger.
- Hold about 3cm from the tip.
- The hand should be kept below the writing line.
- The paper should be slightly to the right.
- Use the right hand to steady the paper.

NB: It is very important that in a handwriting session or a lesson where writing is the focus activity that a right-handed child is NOT seated next to the left hand side of a left-handed child as their elbows will collide.

### **Assessment**

The Senior Leadership Team and Middle Leaders will monitor writing and presentation in books regularly (see monitoring plan) during work scrutinies. The following will be considered:

- Is the writing legible?
- Are letters correctly shaped and proportioned?
- Are the joins made correctly?
- Are the spaces between letters, words and lines appropriate?
- Is the size of the writing appropriate?
- Is the writing properly aligned?

### **Individual Assessment**

Children should be observed as they write during handwriting lessons – the teacher must circulate, monitor and intervene. Teachers also need to monitor and mark whole pieces of writing. The following should be considered:

- Is the posture correct?
- Does the child hold the pencil correctly?
- Does the child use the movement when forming or joining letters? Are any of the letters reversed or inverted?
- Does the child write fluently or rhythmically?
- Is the writing legible?