

Bosmere Community Primary School



Handwriting Policy

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Approved by the Committee/Governing body	<i>Bosmere Primary School</i>
Signature of Chair of Governors	
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Introduction

This policy is to outline how we teach Handwriting.

As a school we recognise that handwriting is an important skill and children's ability to write fluently for the rest of their lives depends on a good foundation of taught handwriting in the early years of their education.

We believe that handwriting is a developmental process with its own distinctive stages of progression from readiness for handwriting, through to letter joins, practicing speed and fluency and higher presentation skills. A flexible, fluent and legible handwriting style empowers children to write with confidence and creativity. This is an entitlement that needs skilful teaching if each individual is to reach their full potential at Bosmere.

Aims

Our aims in teaching handwriting are:

- ✓ For all children to develop a well-formed, legible style of handwriting in both joined and printed styles, with increasing fluency, confidence and speed.
- ✓ To raise attainment for all pupils in handwriting through a consistent approach across school guided by the Penpals for Handwriting scheme.
- ✓ That all teachers and support staff must use and model the agreed cursive style of handwriting when writing on the board or marking work.
- ✓ That teachers, support staff and pupils use all opportunities for writing as handwriting practice in all writing across the curriculum.
- ✓ To make provision for left handed children to develop free flowing writing.
- ✓ For all children's skills in handwriting to be reflected in the presentation of their work and their joy of writing.

In order to achieve this, children will be taught:

To develop fine motor control,

The importance of correct posture and paper position whether right or left handed,

To use a pen/pencil and to hold it effectively,

To write from left to right and top to bottom on a page,

To start and finish letters correctly,

To form letters of consistent size and shape,

The language of writing and how to use the correct terminology, (e.g. ascenders)

To put regular spaces between words,

How to form upper and lower case letters,

How to join letters correctly,

How to write legibly in both joined and printed style,

To use different styles of writing for different purposes,

The importance of neat and clear presentation in order to communicate meaning effectively.

To develop greater control and fluency as they become increasingly confident.

At Bosmere Primary school handwriting is developed through systematic and regular practice in the teaching of handwriting using the **Penpals for Handwriting scheme**. Penpals provides clear progression for children aged 3 to 11 starting in nursery where children practice their gross and fine motor skills in readiness for handwriting. This finishes in Years 5 & 6 where basic handwriting issues are revised and speed and fluency improved. Children are also taught alternative joins and encouraged to form their own style of joined handwriting.

This whole school approach ensures a consistency of style and approach which leads to an effective progression of experience and teaching. Some children who may need extra support with handwriting, may receive extra interventions to support them with their writing development. For children who may need extra support with developing their hand writing skills, may receive a *motor skills intervention* program to address gaps within their hand writing skills.

Differentiation:

Here at Bosmere we take a developmental approach to the teaching of handwriting so there is an opportunity to start where the children are. If children aren't ready for the age appropriate work then they should be working from the previous letter family or at the very least, the practice letters given to them should be personalised for the child as needed.

Daily Timings:

Handwriting lessons across KS1 and 2 consist of a 10 minute whole class session timetabled four times per week. Children will then have the opportunity to practice their new skills during early morning learning and will also apply their hand writing skills within literacy lessons and other writing opportunities.

EYFS - The development of gross and fine motor writing skills are continuous and ongoing every day. Letter formation will be taught using the Penpals for Handwriting scheme.

Common Approaches:

- To be consistent in the way in which we form individual letters by following the Penpals for Handwriting and Joins Guidance Document-see Appendix 1.
- To follow Penpals for Handwriting for 'Letter Families' which builds on letter formation in Foundation stage with no joining letter sets to the teaching of joins throughout each year group.
- To ensure that any displays placed around school, including in classrooms, are modelling the Penpals for Handwriting joins *where possible*.
- To ensure that all learning intention stickers/labels and classroom resources are printed in Penpals joined font which is downloaded from the Penpals font disc onto laptops.
- To ensure that all writing presented on the IWB/flip chart is modelled by the teacher using the correct form for joins.
- To ensure that letters are taught to join to other letters using the Handwriting Joins Guidance. This document details the required horizontal, diagonal and bottom diagonal joins taught during each year group as well as the letters that should remain not joined.

The letter families are grouped as follows:

1. The Ladder Family which includes the letters l, i, u, t, y and j
2. The One Armed Robot Family which includes the letters n, m, h, b, k, p and r
3. The Curly Caterpillar Family which includes the letters c, a, d, e, s, g, f, q and o
4. The Zig Zag Monster Family which includes the letters z, v, w and x

Capital letters are not joined and are all formed at the same height. Left Handed writers may form the letters E, F, H, I, J and T differently.

Other break letters include f, j, y and x. Where used, the letters g and q will join the previous letter via a diagonal join but not the letter after them (see joins guidance – red text). The letters f, g, j and y will be joined to the next letter in UKS2 in the form of a bottom diagonal join as shown on the Joins Guidance document.

Teaching the correct formation of the letters should be given highest priority and that this should be achieved by pupils before any attempt is made at joining. We aim for all children to be using a pen when going into Year 5. Since handwriting is an essential movement skill, correct modelling of the agreed handwriting style by all adults is very important.

When required, advice will be requested from Occupational Therapists or other relevant agencies to help with specific individual problems.

Intervention measures are to be included in IEPs where relevant.

Pencil/Pen Grip

The pen or pencil should be gripped comfortably between forefinger and thumb with the second finger below to steady it. If you pick up a pen which is lying on the table in front of you with its nib towards you in line with your forearm, you instinctively pick it up in the correct grip.

Posture

Children should be encouraged to sit up straight with their feet on the floor. The non-writing hand must be used to steady the book or paper.

Guidance for Left-handers

Left-handed children will not in any way be discouraged from favouring the left-hand in their work. However, special rules apply for left-handers. They should sit on the left-hand side of double desks or tables. They must be able to rest their left forearms on the edge of the desk. The book or paper must slope in line with the left forearm. As writing is completed down the page, the paper must be moved away from the body in the same line. The aim is to keep the left arm in much the same position at all times to avoid the elbow being cramped by the chest. Moving the paper away from the body prevents writing becoming cramped at the foot of the page. Practice on a vertical board could help this position. The right hand must be used to control the movement of the page.

The left hand should end up below the line of writing to avoid smudging and to give a clear view of what is being written. Children should be discouraged from hooking their left hand above the line of writing to avoid smudging. The tripod grip (thumb and first finger grip the pencil, which then rests on the side of the second finger) should be encouraged.

Guidance for Right-handers

Right-handers do not face the same problems as left-handers, but many children will find it helpful to slope the paper slightly and to move it away from the body as the page is completed.

Monitoring and Assessment

The monitoring of the teaching of handwriting is carried out by Class teachers, the Head teacher, Literacy Leaders and Key Stage Leaders in line with the school development plan.

Assessment of handwriting is an on going process and will take place formally and informally, during the regular, focused handwriting sessions and across other curricular areas. This will provide evidence of children's progress and attainment, will serve to inform the children's future learning targets and provide information when reporting to parents.

Records will be kept of the progress made on National Curriculum expectations-see Appendix 2.

Handwriting is assessed as part of ongoing moderation. Teacher's Performance of Writing (POW) grids will reflect children's attainment in this area. Termly Pupil Book Studies and Learning Walks/Drop Ins will also focus on ensuring children are making progress in this area.

Celebration of Handwriting.

Achievement milestones in handwriting will be celebrated through our Bronze-Platinum certificates, leading to the achievement of a pen licence on achieving the Platinum certificate-see Appendix ***

Checklist for Teachers

If a child's handwriting is to develop into a pleasing and consistent style, it is helpful to examine each piece of writing in the light of the following criteria:

Shape- Are all letters properly formed and clear?

Joining- Are as many letters as possible joined consistently?

Slope- Is the slope of letters consistent? Letters should either be all perpendicular or all sloping (predominantly a forwards slope will be used, however backwards slopes can be developed).

Even-ness- Are letters of a consistent and reasonable size? Capitals can be too big; tall letters too tall, small letters too small.

Floating and Sinking- Do letters sit on the line? Words sometimes float above or sink below the writing line. This happens because the writing hand is not moving steadily across the page.

Particular Letters- Which letters are really well formed? Which ones need careful practice?

Handwriting Skills and Development

To achieve our aims we will give our children opportunities to develop their handwriting through the following: - by using The Penpals for Handwriting scheme alongside the Handwriting Joins Guidance document and by using the Primary Strategy to link handwriting to phonics (where appropriate). Also by monitoring and assessing handwriting as part of the marking process.

Structure of Handwriting sessions in KS1 and KS2

Children should be correctly seated at tables with a whiteboard and pen and handwriting books/paper/practice sheets.

Children can be seated in handwriting ability groups if required.

1. The teacher will model/use the disc to model each join/letter from the chosen set. Children will practice each join on their whiteboard. The teacher/TA should be monitoring this closely to ensure correct of formation of joins/letters.
2. Children can write a sequence of the joins in their book/on their paper. Teacher/TA should closely monitor of formation of letter/joins, size and consistency as children write.
3. Children to practice each join as part of a word in handwriting books/on paper. Teachers can write example words on IWB or create a photocopied sheet before the session. HAB pupils could be given a full sentence with a variety of letters/joins allowing teacher to check for fluency/accuracy of joins/letters used.

Foundation Stage

Children begin the Foundation Stage with a wide variety of writing skills ranging from simply making marks to writing their own name unaided. They will move from gross to finer motor skills using a variety of tactile methods. They need opportunities to make marks in their own way and to gradually refine these into recognisable patterns and eventually individual letters.

A range of pre-writing activities opportunities must be provided in the learning environment to encourage and support children develop gross and fine motor skills, develop co-ordination and to promote pencil control and awareness of letter shapes and orientation.

The Penpals for Handwriting scheme will be introduced in Reception starting with The Ladder Family. This will help prepare children for handwriting, consolidate their motor control and introduce letter shapes. It is expected that most children will be forming each letter by the end of Reception. Handwriting should be taught alongside phonics making use of the kinaesthetic learning to help children to internalise the letter shapes that go with the sounds. Children should write on wide-lined paper when they have the hand control to do it confidently. Lined paper is important because so much about handwriting is to do

with the letters' orientation to the line. Letters and Sounds' suggests a sequence for teaching the letters sounds, handwriting can thus be coordinated with phonic teaching where two letters stand for one sound. Teachers will show children the joined form of the letters in a sound but children will not be expected to practice these letters in joined form.

Key Stage 1

Year 1

In Year 1, children practice forming letters and focus is solely on achieving the correct formation and orientation of letters. Children will practice in handwriting books.

Children will be following the Penpals for Handwriting scheme and the Handwriting Joins Guidance beginning with The Ladder Family and moving through schematically as required.

Children need to be made aware of:

- (a) Where the letter starts;
- (b) Where the individual letter stands with regard to the baseline;
- (c) Ascenders and descenders - lined paper will assist;
- (d) Spacing and finger space between words;
- (e) Consistent writing size;
- (f) Capital letters and their appropriate use

Children will also have the opportunity to practice handwriting in conjunction with spelling and phonic patterns.

Year 2

By Year 2 children should be moving towards a joined handwriting style and be able to write on lined paper with a reasonable degree of accuracy. They practice and build on Year 1 letter formation and orientation. Children should practice in handwriting books.

Children will begin joining only when they are secure with letter formation and orientation and will follow the Penpals for Handwriting scheme in conjunction with the Handwriting Joins Guidance for year 2. Handwriting can be taught in direct relation to phonics in most sets. Children should be shown the joined form of a grapheme in phonics and should be expected to write it in this form in addition to the un-joined form when practicing.

Children should also have the opportunity to practice handwriting in relation to spelling and phonic patterns.

The new National Curriculum states that children should start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters from year 2.

Joining is not a statutory requirement until Key Stage 2 but teachers are encouraged to teach children to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely with the correct orientation.

Presentation in KS1

Children will not be expected to write the date or learning intention in KS1. This will be on stickers/via stamps placed on the upper left side of page where possible. Children should be accurately writing on the lines and next to the margin by the end of KS1. Children should be taught how to use a ruler correctly to draw lines. Any headings/subheadings used in writing should be accurately underlined using a ruler. Ruler use should be encouraged across the curriculum at all times. Children will not use rubbers. Any mistakes should be neatly crossed through using a ruler.

Key Stage 2

In KS2 the children continue from what they have learnt in KS1.

The children practice their handwriting using a pen if the class teacher feels that they are ready, otherwise they will continue to use a pencil. Children may use handwriting books or paper as per their ability level and teacher's discretion. Children will receive 4 x 10 minute sessions of timetabled taught handwriting per week.

In Year 3 children continue to practice correct letter formation according to the schools agreed letter formation using the Penpals for Handwriting discs and Handwriting Joins Guidance document.

The emphasis is on building upon the joins established in Year 2.

In Year 4 children continue to practice correct letter formation according to the Penpals for Handwriting discs and Handwriting Joins Guidance document.

The emphasis is on ensuring consistency in size and proportion and using joined writing for all writing except where other special forms are required.

Children should be given regular opportunities to practice handwriting in conjunction with spellings in both years 3 and 4. Children are expected to be joining all handwriting by the end of year 4 except where other forms are needed.

In Years 5 and 6 NC guidelines assume handwriting skills should be established and that children should have their own developed cursive style. However, in reality this is not always the case. Children will be taught to join some of the un-joined letters using a diagonal bottom join.

Children in Years 5 and 6 will have opportunities to revisit the basics and work on the presentation side of their handwriting. Children should also be given regular opportunities to practice handwriting in conjunction with spellings. The Penpals Years 5&6 CD should be used and provides practice activities and self-assessment alongside projects intended to help children with their style and the presentation of different kinds of text. The CD-ROM is split between Basic and Presentation units. Basic units focus on basic handwriting skills and address common issues that may be inhibiting fast and fluent handwriting. Presentation units recognise that the purpose for writing has implications for handwriting style.

Presentation in KS2

Children will not be expected to write the learning intention in LKS2. Learning intentions will be on stickers placed to the upper left of the page where possible.

UKS2 children will write the learning intention for literacy which will be neatly underlined. All children in KS2 will be expected to write the long date in literacy which will be neatly underlined.

In all other subjects, children will write the short date on the top right hand side of the page, neatly underlined.

Any headings/subheadings used in writing should be accurately underlined using a ruler. Ruler use should be encouraged across the curriculum at all times. Children will not use rubbers. Any mistakes should be neatly crossed through using a ruler.

Pen License.

The introduction of handwriting pens will begin in Year 3. It is our aim that the majority of Year 3 have been taught the whole range of joins and will be developing a degree of accuracy and fluency by the end of the year. Once teachers feel that pupils are presenting accurately, neatly and all letters are joined correctly, they will present the pupil with a pen license. The child will then be able to use a handwriting pen for all writing activities. If mistakes are made, children should neatly cross through the mistake using a ruler. Scribbling out mistakes should be discouraged. All children will continue to use a pencil during maths learning.

Resources

Pens/Pencils provided by the school.

In KS2, handwriting pens will be available from school.

Pencil grips

The Penpals for Handwriting discs downloaded onto laptops as required. These discs also include practice sheets, assessment materials and teachers notes.

Handwriting Joins Guidance document.

The Penpals Joined font can be downloaded from the Penpals font disc.

The Writing Repeater found on the ICT games website can be used for additional teaching when required.

Appendix 1

Handwriting Joins Guidance

This document shows what children should be taught across each year group. Teachers can use Pen Pals to teach the joins if they wish or can demonstrate themselves on the IWB. The table below shows the PenPal disc that is relevant to the particular set of letters/joins that the class is working on.

Library of joins	Penpals Disc
<p>FOUNDATION DEVELOPING GROSS MOTOR SKILLS DEVELOPING FINE MOTOR SKILLS DEVELOPING PATTERNS AND BASIC LETTER MOVEMENTS (as per Penpals discs)</p> <p>When writing commences:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Long ladder letters: l i t u j y 2. One armed robot letters: b n h m k p 3. Capitals for long ladders and one armed robots 4. Curly Caterpillar letters: c a d o s g q e f 5. Capitals for curly caterpillar letters 6. Zig Zag Monster letters: z v w x 7. Capitals for zig zag monster letters 	<p>Foundation 1 and 2</p>
<p>YEAR 1 Securing letter formation and orientation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Long ladder letters: l i t u j y 2. One armed robot letters: b n h m k p 3. Capitals for long ladders and one armed robots 4. Curly Caterpillar letters: c a d o s g q e f 5. Capitals for curly caterpillar letters 6. Zig Zag Monster letters: z v w x 7. Capitals for zig zag monster letters 	<p>Foundation 2</p>
<p>YEAR 2 Securing letter formation and orientation as above then commencing joining with: (most of these can be taught with phonics) Set One: ch ai wh ow th ng ing</p>	<p>Year 1</p> <p>Not as per disc and need to be modelled by teacher</p>
<p>YEAR 2 Set Two:</p>	<p>Year 2</p>

ai ie er oh ou ie ue oe ve ee le aw ey ay oy	Not as per disc and need to be modelled by teacher
YEAR 2 Set Three: ea oo oa wa wo air ear ck ui ed ur oi	Year 2
YEAR 3/4 Set Four: wa wo oor our al el at il ill an ip ok ot ob ol op ov on	Year 2 Not as per disc and need to be modelled by teacher
YEAR 3/4 Set Five: ed cc ic ad dd oc od va vo ig ag eg og	Year 2 Not as per disc and need to be modelled by teacher
YEAR 3/4 Set Six as es is os ws ns os ws ns ds ls ts ks	Year 2 Not as per disc and need to be modelled by teacher
YEAR 3/4 Set Seven: sh sl st sk sw si se sm sn sp su sd so	Year 3
YEAR 3/4 Set Eight: rb rh rk rl rt ri ru rp ij aj ej	Year 3 Not as per disc and need to be modelled by teacher
YEAR 3/4 Set Nine: are ere ure ore ire rr ss aq iq uq YEAR 3/4 Set Nine: ph pl bl bu pu pi pe ba bs bb pp	Year 3 Not as per disc and need to be modelled by teacher Year 4

YEAR 5/6 SCHEME – Use the penpals discs and corresponding teacher books. Also see page 5 and 6 of this document.

1. Revision of above joins and un-joined letters
2. Introducing a slope
3. Developing style for speed (diagonal bottom joins)
4. Different styles for different purpose

5. Writing at speed
6. Self-Assessment

Year 5

Year 6

Year 5/Primary 6

Term 1

- 1 Introducing sloped writing in letter families
- 2 Practising sloped writing: diagonal join to ascender: *th, sh, nb, nd, ht, st*
- 3 Practising sloped writing: diagonal join, no ascender: *ai, ay, kn, er, ie, en*
- 4 Practising sloped writing: diagonal join to an anticlockwise letter: *ac, sc, bo, da, ea, ho*
- 5 Practising sloped writing: horizontal join to ascender: *wh, wt, oh, ol, of, ob*
- 6 Practising sloped writing: horizontal join, no ascender: *oi, oy, ou, op, ve*
- 7 Practising sloped writing: horizontal join to an anticlockwise letter: *oo, oa, wa, wo, va, vo*
- 8 Practising sloped writing: joining from r: *ra, re, ri, ro, ru*
- 9 Practising sloped writing: joining from s: *sh, su, sc, sl, su, sp*
- 10 End-of-term check

Term 2

- 11 Practising sloped writing: proportion – joining from f to ascender: *fl, ft*
- 12 Practising sloped writing: size – joining from f, no ascender: *fa, fe, fi, fo, fu*
- 13 Different styles for different purposes: writing a paragraph
- 14 Practising sloped writing: speed: *ff*
- 15 Practising sloped writing: speed and legibility: *rr*
- 16 Practising sloped writing: size, proportion and spacing: *ss*
- 17 Practising sloped writing: building speed: *qu*
- 18 Different styles for different purposes: decorative alphabets
- 19 Different styles for different purposes
- 20 End-of-term check

Term 3

- 21 Sloped writing: proportion, joining p and b to ascenders: *ph, pl, bl*
- 22 Handwriting for different purposes: joining from p and b, no ascender: *bu, bi, pe, pu, pi, pr*
- 23 Practising sloped writing: parallel downstrokes: *pp, bb*
- 24 Practising sloped writing: all double letters
- 25 Practising sloped writing for speed: *tial, rial*

Year 6/Primary 7

Term 1

- 1 Style for speed: crossbar join from t: *th, ti, tr, ta, tt*
- 2 Style for speed: looping from g: *gl, gi, gr, ga, gg*
- 3 Style for speed: looping from j and y: *je, jo, ye, yr, yo*
- 4 Style for speed: looping from f
- 5 Style for speed: different joins to s
- 6 Style for speed: looping from b
- 7 Style for speed: joining from v, w, x and z
- 8 Handwriting for different purposes: abbreviations
- 9 Spacing between words
- 10 End-of-term check

Term 2

- 11 Improving handwriting: the importance of consistent sizing
- 12 Improving handwriting: the importance of proportion
- 13 Improving handwriting: the importance of spacing
- 14 Improving handwriting: the importance of consistent sizing of parallel ascenders and descenders
- 15 Improving handwriting: the importance of closed and open letters
- 16 Improving handwriting: pen breaks in longer words
- 17 Handwriting for different purposes: annotations
- 18 Handwriting for different purposes
- 19 Choice of handwriting tools
- 20 End-of-term check

Term 3

- 21 Handwriting for different purposes: fast-joined and print letters
- 22 Handwriting for different purposes: note making
- 23 Handwriting for different purposes: neat writing
- 24 Handwriting for different purposes: print letters for personal details
- 25 Different styles of writing
- 26 Handwriting for different purposes: presentation
- 27 Handwriting for different purposes: decorated capitals
- 28 Handwriting for different purposes: layout
- 29 Assessment
- 30 Handwriting for different purposes: handwriting patterns



Summary of changes to the policy

Document control			
Date	Section(s)	Update(s)	Notes
Oct2019	Added Appendix 1	Joins guidance	
Apr2021	Assessment & Appendix 2	New record keeping processes added.	
Apr2021	Celebrating & Appendix 3	Certificate and Certificate achievement record sheet added	