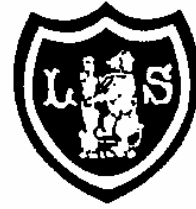


Lapworth CE Primary School



Policy for Handwriting

Aim:

At Lapworth School, it is our aim that the children will be able to write clearly, fluently and quickly so that they can cope with the everyday demands of life and school. The children are taught the conventional ways of forming letter shapes, both lower case and capitals, through purposeful guided practice in order to foster a comfortable and legible handwriting style.

The importance of handwriting in the curriculum:

Handwriting is concerned with individual expression and the conveying of meaning through fluent composition. The principal aim is that handwriting becomes an automatic process, which frees pupils to focus on the content of the writing. In order for this to occur, handwriting is taught in ways that enhance fluency, legibility, purposefulness and the opportunity for creative expression.

Entitlement and curriculum provision:

Handwriting is taught regularly through weekly lessons following the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy Framework. Teaching generally occurs inside the Literacy Hour. Shared and guided writing provides many other opportunities for the modeling and monitoring of handwriting. There are times at both key stages when this aspect of writing is a focus for attention and more time is devoted to the objectives relating to handwriting and presentation. Practice sessions mainly occur outside the Literacy Hour.

Teaching and Learning:

Handwriting is a skill, which needs to be taught explicitly. Since handwriting is essentially a movement skill, correct modeling of the agreed style by the teacher is very important; it is not sufficient to require pupils to copy models from a published scheme or worksheet. Consistency in the attitudes displayed, the methods employed and provided is the key to effective learning. A mixture of whole class, small group and individual teaching is planned.

The role of the teacher:

- To follow the school policy to help each child develop legible and fluent handwriting;
- To provide direct teaching and accurate modeling;
- To provide resources and an environment which promotes good handwriting;
- To observe pupils, monitor progress and determine targets for development;
- To model appropriate handwriting to the children when using white boards, flip charts or marking books.

Continuity and progression:

The formation taught is a cursive style and is to include the use of a lead out stroke. This ensures an early transition to joined handwriting. Once children are able to form letters correctly, line guides should be provided when children are writing on plain paper to help develop uniformity of size and the correct position of the letters. Wide or narrow lines are used according to the child's needs and at the teacher's discretion. It is school policy that children are taught to present work to appropriate high standards. Teaching includes areas such as dates, underlines headings and how to cross out (one straight line). The use of erasers should be carefully monitored and preferably only used for final draft work. The correct pencil hold is taught and the correct grip is encouraged through the provision of three sided pencils or tripod grips if required.

Foundation Stage:

The emphasis at this stage is with movement rather than neatness. Letter formation (starting at the right entry point and then moving in the right direction) learned at this early stage becomes automatic and has a profound influence on later fluency and legibility. To aid movement, close attention is given to pencil grip, correct posture, the positioning of the paper and the organization of the writing space. Teachers are vigilant to ensure that bad habits do not become ingrained and that the specific needs of left-handed pupils (for example, additional tracing of letters at the pre-writing stage) and those with special educational needs are met.

In the pre-communicative stage pupils play with writing and these experiments are recognised and praised as an important stage in the child's understanding that marks on paper convey meaning. Pupils are given the opportunity to experiment with a range of writing materials and implements; a multi-sensory approach is used to help pupils feel the movement in the hand. Fine motor skills are developed through bead threading, colouring, etc. Pencil control is developed through tracing, dot to dot, pattern copying, etc.

Letter formation is practiced and the link to the phonic sound is made.

Key Stage 1:

Building on the foundation stage, pupils at Key Stage 1 develop a legible style. This is achieved in Year 1 by developing a comfortable and efficient pencil grip and by practising handwriting in conjunction with spelling and independent writing. Children move on to thin pencils when appropriate.

Guided letter control is practiced in letter 'families'. Correct letter orientation, formation and proportion is taught in line with the school's agreed handwriting style. Basic joins are introduced when appropriate. This continues in Year 2 and the four basic handwriting joins (diagonal and horizontal joins to letters with and without ascenders) are practised and letters that do not join are identified.

Years 3 and 4:

In Year 3 the pupils consolidate their use of the four basic handwriting joins, ensuring consistency in size, proportion and spacing of letters. By the end of Year 3 joined handwriting should be used at all times unless other specific forms are required, eg, printing on a map, a fast script for notes. In Year 4 handwriting speed, fluency and legibility are built up through practice. Children are given experience of a variety of writing tools.

Years 5 and 6:

Years 5 and 6 are used to consolidate learning for those pupils who have not yet achieved a fluent and legible joined script. Those who have will develop an individual style based on the principles of good handwriting taught in previous years. Experimentation with different styles and writing implements is encouraged with the aim of increasing speed whilst maintaining legibility.

Children are able to bring in their own writing implements having chosen which suits their handwriting best. Biro's are not to be used.

Key Stage 2 (overview):

During this stage the children continue to have direct teaching and regular practice of handwriting. We aim for them to develop a clear and fluent style by the end of Key Stage 2, be able to adapt their handwriting for the following different purposes:

- A neat legible hand for finished, presented work;
- A faster script for notes;
- Print for labeling maps or diagrams.

Inclusion:

The vast majority of pupils are able to write legibly and fluently. However, some pupils need more support and provision will be made for this in Individual Education Plans. Teachers of children whose handwriting is limited by problems with fine motor skills should liaise with the SENco to develop a programme designed for the individual child. This may involve extra handwriting sessions and access to extra resources. Other areas that could be considered are posture, lighting, angle of tables, etc. Outside agencies can be contacted where appropriate.

All teachers are aware of the specific needs of left-handed pupils and make appropriate provision:

- Paper should be positioned to the left for right-handed pupils and to the right for left-handed pupils and slanted to suit the individual in either case;
- Pencils should not be held too close to the point as this can interrupt pupils' line of vision;
- Pupils should be positioned so that they can place their paper to their left side;
- Left-handed pupils should sit to the left of a right-handed child so that they are not competing for space;
- Extra practice with left-to-right exercises may well be necessary before pupils write left-to-right automatically.

Teachers are alert to the fact that it is very difficult for left-handed pupils to follow handwriting movements when a right-handed teacher models them. Teachers demonstrate to left-handers on an individual or group basis, even if the resulting writing is not neat.

Review:

This policy will be reviewed annually in line with the scheduled review of the English policy. The subject manager is responsible for reporting to the Governors' curriculum and standards committee about the quality of its implementation and its impact on standards. In the light of this, policy amendments may be made.